

*Brazilian president Lula da Silva
firmly asserts Israel is committing
genocide in Gaza*



Rio de Janeiro, February 24 (RHC)-- Brazil's president repeats his recent assertion that the Israeli regime is committing genocide in Gaza, braving the repercussions that have come to affect his country's ties with the Israeli regime and its main ally, the United States.

"What...Israel is doing is not a war, it is genocide, because it is killing women and children," Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said at an event in Rio de Janeiro on Friday. "It is a genocide. Thousands of children are dead and thousands are missing. Soldiers are not dying. Women and children are dying at the hospital," he said. "If that's not genocide, I don't know what genocide is," he exclaimed.

"I do not exchange my dignity for falsehood," said Lula, who once again spoke in favor of the creation of a "free and sovereign" Palestinian state.

Last Sunday, Lula had unequivocally lambasted the Israeli regime's savagery in its October-present military aggression against the coastal territory, which has so far killed more than 29,500 Palestinians, mostly women and children.

"What's happening in the Gaza Strip isn't a war, it's a genocide," Lula had said, addressing an African Union summit in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, adding: "It's not a war of soldiers against soldiers. It's a war between a highly prepared army and women and children."

"What's happening in the Gaza Strip with the Palestinian people hasn't happened at any other moment in history. Actually, it has happened: When Hitler decided to kill the Jews," he had noted.

The Brazilian foreign ministry confirmed afterwards that the country's ambassador to the occupied territories had been recalled "for consultations," adding that it had also summoned the Israeli envoy to Brasilia.

Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz has reacted to Lula's comments by summoning Brazil's ambassador for a formal reprimand, telling the envoy that "President Lula ... is persona non grata in Israel until he takes it back."

This is not the first time that the Brazilian president has singled out the Israeli regime for unashamed criticism since the onset of its military onslaught against Gaza. Speaking after a meeting with his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah al-Sisi in Cairo last Thursday, Lula had said Israel's behavior in the coastal sliver "has no explanation."

"With the pretext of fighting [the Palestinian resistance movement] Hamas, it is killing women and children."

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