

# *Lula da Silva tells Donald Trump to leave Venezuela alone*

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Brasilia, May 23 (RHC)-- Former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva requested respect for the Venezuelan people and their right to decide their own future. In an interview aired from the Federal Prison in Curitiba, Brazil, former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva commented on the behavior of right-wing governments and recommended to U.S. President Donald Trump that he takes care of his own country and leave Venezuela in peace.

"The treatment they are giving to Venezuela is not right. Venezuela must have sovereignty, it must have self-determination. Venezuela is a problem of the Venezuelan people, it is not a problem of the United States. Trump should take care of the United States and stop going where nobody calls him."

Asked about the rise of the right, the Workers' Party leader recalled that Latin America, between the year 2000 and 2004, experienced an extraordinary period with high economic growth rates, income distribution and social inclusion -- with the election of Nestor Kirchner and Cristina Fernandez in Argentina, Ricardo Lagos in Chile, Lula da Silva in Brazil, Evo Morales in Bolivia, Hugo Chavez in Venezuela and Rafael Correa in Ecuador.

At this moment, however, the right is governing but without achieving important development results: "Now you are living a moment of the extreme right, which is failing in an absurd way," the former Brazilian president said and added that "in times of terror, we chose monsters to protect us."

He also pointed out that “when you create hatred in society, anti-politics takes away the hope of anyone... it takes away hope in existing institutions, which means that everything is fair game.”

The current failure of right-wing rulers, Lula warned, is opening the way to even more extremist leaders. "Neoliberalism, in the form in which it arose at the globalization era, is losing its place... [but] it is losing in favor of the right, just as it lost in favor of Hitler or Mussolini... even in Germany, Angela Merkel, who is a very strong politician, would not rule Germany if it were not due to agreements with the Social Democratic Party (SPD)."

According to the former Brazilian President, Trump's rise reflects that political dynamic in which the right conquers power by fabricating lies. "U.S. citizens did not believe Trump had the slightest chance. And why did he eventually win the elections? It was not because of [Vladimir] Putin, as they try to claim. It was because of lies and fake news, as it happened here in Brazil, too."

Lula also recalled that easy, although unfeasible, promises were part of Trump's electoral strategy. "'America for Americans', 'Jobs for Americans.' His election was due to the fact that he had a correct speech for white workers... who were running out of jobs," Lula said and argued that Trump "promised the obvious: employment for the American people. He promised to fight against the Chinese for the American people and generate employment. That made him win the election."

Regarding what is happening in Brazil, Lula indicated that former captain Jair Bolsonaro will likely run into more trouble during his term in office if he keeps his current attitudes.

"When I was elected as president, there was a 513 member parliament in which I had 80 congressional representative. Bolsonaro only has 50. He will need a lot more than I did to build a [favorable] force correlation. It's no use saying 'the old politics,' because he is 'the old politics'."

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