

# *Brazilian court upholds 17-year sentence against Lula da Silva*

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Brasilia, May 7 (RHC)-- Brazil's Federal Court of the Fourth Region (TRF-4) has upheld the 17-year prison sentence handed down in November against former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

The TRF-4 judges also denied the defense's request that the virtual trial be suspended and postponed for a face-to-face session when COVID-19 no longer poses a threat. "Keeping the sentence is unjust and arbitrary," Lula's defense lawyers denounced, who did not have access to the virtual trial.

"The fact that we were not allowed to be at the trial is a violation of the constitutional right to a broad defense," attorney Cristiano Zanin Martins stressed.

For Judge Joao Pedro Gebran Neto, however, the defense's new appeal "shows disagreement with what has already been decided." Gebran, who was the instructor for the so-called Car Wash Operation cases in court, asked to "maintain the sentence of the former Brazilian president for passive corruption and money laundering."

After hearing the court's decision, Lula tweeted: "I knew this decision would come. I just hope I'm alive to see them unmasked. I will keep on fighting."



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