

# *The Americas in turmoil*

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The future of our planet seems quite gloomy. Worldwide, there are more than eight million 300 thousand people infected with COVID-19 -- almost half of them concentrated in The Americas... with several countries in our region still on the upward curve of the disease.

The United States accounts for the most discouraging statistics, with 2.1 million patients, followed by Brazil that practically hits one million infections.

The situation is also alarming in Peru with 240,000 confirmed cases and Chile with 220,000 -- but also, small nations like Guatemala are experiencing a constant increase in contagions.

It's been demonstrated that Donald Trump in the United States, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, and Sebastián Piñera in Chile, committed huge mistakes in handling the crisis, which explains the disproportionate growth of the pandemic on the continent.

There was also a neglect of the rhythm and timing of containment measures. For countries where there was still no significant circulation of the virus, the governments decided to quarantine and even curfew. These regulations were lifted precisely when the infections started to spread.

However, the neoliberal model imposed by global power centers on the governments of the region, led them to sacrifice public services before the great altar of markets and private businesses.

It is a backward theory that for decades preached the State's expulsion from the decision making process regarding the economy, national wealth management, occupational schemes, including retirement

pensions.

Public investments in health infrastructure decreased, since they were left in private sectors, as happened in education, water systems, electricity, highways and roads restoration and creation, among many others.

When the pandemic situation first started, governments realized that they lacked the basic instruments to face the new disease, and the population was defenseless. Foreign and local investment only got involved in the fight to demand the continuation of economic activities, regardless the accumulated victims.

Neoliberalism created an army formed by poor sectors who had to choose between starving to death or dying from the new coronavirus. In some places, what little aid was available of exhausted governments was diminished by corruption, another evil inherited from a market without any control or regulations.

With the results so obvious, now people must find a way to get out of the catastrophe caused by the neoliberal models that have devastated The Americas.

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