

Millions of Brazilians listen to Letter in Defense of Democracy

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Citizens gathered at Largo Sao Francisco listen to the Letter in Defense of Democracy, Sao Paulo, Brazil, Aug. 11, 2022. | Photo: Twitter/ @bbcbrasil

Brasilia, August 12 (RHC)-- In Brazil on Thursday, jurists, intellectuals, artists, workers and businessmen took part in the reading of the "Letter to Brazilian Women and Men in Defense of the Democratic Rule of Law," a document which was prepared by Sao Paulo University's Law School and has been signed by over 900,000 Brazilians so far.

The text, which updates a manifesto that Brazilians produced against the military dictatorship in 1977, is aimed at alerting citizens and the international community about the veiled threats of a coup d'état made by the far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, who will seek reelection in October.

The full text of the Charter is presented below.

Letter to Brazilians in Defense of the Democratic Rule of Law

In August 1977, amidst the celebrations of the sesquicentennial of the foundation of the Law Schools in Brazil, professor Goffredo da Silva Telles Junior, master of all of us, in the free territory of Largo de Sao Francisco, read the Letter to Brazilians, in which he denounced the illegitimacy of the then military government and the state of exception in which we lived.

It also called for the re-establishment of the rule of law and the convening of a National Constituent Assembly.

The seed planted bore fruit. Brazil overcame the military dictatorship. The National Constituent Assembly rescued the legitimacy of our institutions, reestablishing the democratic rule of law with the prevalence of respect for fundamental rights.

We have the powers of the Republic, the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary, all independent, autonomous and committed to respecting and ensuring compliance with the greater covenant, the Federal Constitution.

The tweet reads: "Let's celebrate Democracy! Sign the letter to Brazilians in Defense of the Democratic Rule of Law!"

Under the mantle of the Federal Constitution of 1988, which is about to complete its 34th anniversary, we went through free and periodic elections, in which the political debate on projects for the country has always been democratic, with the final decision being left to popular sovereignty.

Goffredo's lesson is embodied in our Constitution "All power emanates from the people, who exercise it through their elected representatives or directly, under the terms of this Constitution".

Our elections with the electronic counting process have served as an example in the world. We had several alternations of power which respected the results of the polls and led to a republican transition of government. Electronic voting machines, as well as the Electoral Justice, proved to be safe and reliable.

Our democracy has grown and matured, but much remains to be done. We live in a country of profound social inequalities, with deficits in essential public services, such as health, education, housing and public safety. We have a long way to go in developing our economic potential in a sustainable way.

The State is inefficient in the face of its numerous challenges. Demands for greater respect and equality of conditions in terms of race, gender and sexual orientation are still far from being fully met.

In the coming days, in the midst of these challenges, we will have the beginning of the electoral campaign to renew the mandates of state and federal legislatures and executives. At this moment, we should have the apex of democracy with the dispute between the various political projects aimed at convincing the electorate of the best proposal for the direction of the country in the coming years.

Instead of a civic celebration, we are going through a moment of immense danger to democratic normality, of risk to the institutions of the Republic and of insinuations of contempt for the results of the elections.

Groundless attacks unaccompanied by evidence question the fairness of the electoral process and the democratic rule of law so hard won by Brazilian society. Threats to other powers and sectors of civil society and the incitement to violence and the breakdown of the constitutional order are intolerable.

We have recently witnessed authoritarian rants that have jeopardized secular American democracy. There, attempts to destabilize democracy and the people's confidence in the fairness of the elections were unsuccessful. Here, they won't be either.

Our civic conscience is much greater than the opponents of democracy imagine. We know how to put aside minor differences in favor of something much bigger, the defense of the democratic order.

Imbued with the civic spirit that underpinned the 1977 Letter to Brazilians and gathered in the same free territory of Largo de Sao Francisco, regardless of the electoral or partisan preference of each one, we call on Brazilians to be alert in the defense of democracy and respect for the election result.

In today's Brazil there is no more room for authoritarian setbacks. Dictatorship and torture belong to the past. The solution to the immense challenges facing Brazilian society necessarily involves respect for the results of the elections.

In civic vigil against attempts at ruptures, we cry out in unison: Democratic Rule of Law Always!!!!

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