

**Brazil to Launch a Task Force for
the Global Alliance Against
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During a G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazilian President Lula da Silva gave a speech urging countries to join his Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty.

"Nothing is as absurd and unacceptable in the 21st century as the persistence of hunger and poverty, when we have so much abundance and so many scientific and technological resources at our disposal," he said.

The Summit was marked by many strong statements on hunger, poverty and inequality. Brazil's Minister of Social Development, Wellington Dias, said that Brazil "left the 'hunger map' in 2014, only to return to it in 2021 due to a major political setback. However, with the resumption of effective public policies in 2023, we managed to reduce severe food insecurity from 8% to 1.2% of the Brazilian population," [1] and that "today, I can confidently say that on the path we are on, it is possible for us to eliminate hunger in Brazil under President Lula's government by 2026." [2]

Alongside these optimistic declarations, it was acknowledged that the fight against world hunger has stalled for three years and that the UN target of ending world hunger by 2030 is unlikely to be met. In some areas, progress has been made, while in others the situation has actually worsened [3].

More than 100 countries are set to join the alliance, which aims to tackle the problem by establishing mechanisms for the efficient allocation of financial and knowledge resources.

In Brazil, however, we find that although the percentage of people suffering from extreme hunger has been reduced, food is still very expensive for the working class. 79% of Brazilians say they've noticed an increase in prices. [4]

The country suffers from an extremely powerful agribusiness. Brazil is the world's leading exporter of seven food products. These are: soybeans (56% of total exports), corn (31%), coffee (27%), sugar (44%), orange juice (76%), beef (24%) and chicken (33%). [5]

These products are not produced to feed the population and combat rising food prices in Brazil. Instead, they are produced for profit, and while millions are still starving, most of the produce is exported. The big landowners and the countries to which Brazil exports all have an interest in maintaining this dynamic, as it provides high profits for the big landowners and cheap produce for the buying countries. A clear example of how food is grown for profit is how, in a crisis of overproduction, tonnes of food are thrown away, despite starvation in the country, in an attempt to keep prices high [13].

The Landless Rural Workers' Movement (MST) is one of the largest popular movements in Brazil. Among many other things, one of its main goals is to press the government to initiate and carry out a land reform that would take away unproductive or uncultivated land and redistribute it to medium and small-sized family farms that focus on producing cheap food for the population.

Lula promised them that in his third non-consecutive term, he would give the MST the attention many feel it deserves and finally begin the land reform. MST can be considered the largest popular movement in Latin America, comprising roughly

70,000 families. Besides producing food and advocating for land reform, MST planted 10 million trees in the last four years and built more than 300 nurseries. In the educational area, it built two thousand public schools for 200 thousand people, including children, teenagers, young people and adults. Furthermore, it has already taught more than 100 thousand people to read and write [12].

The MST escalated its land occupation to put pressure on Lula's government, which seemed to have forgotten about land reform. In response, the government announced a programme that would facilitate the long-awaited land reform in a "peaceful and respectful" process [6].

It is clear, however, that this is simply to persuade the MST to stop occupying private land.

With MST members frequently harassed [7], attacked and sometimes killed by landowners [8], and with little support from law enforcement, the government is clearly showing leniency towards the big landowners, hoping to give the movement crumbs in the hope that it will lose influence and wither away.

MST is showing some initiative by entering into an agreement with the Chinese universities to receive modern medium-scale agricultural equipment in exchange for knowledge of how family farming works in Brazil, with the intention of setting up Chinese factories for this equipment in Brazil [9]. This is imperialism (monopoly capitalism) in action, as Chinese capital, which has grown too big for its own national borders, seeks new areas to expand into, exploit and monopolise.

China is also the biggest buyer of Brazilian soybeans, having imported 66,608 million tonnes in 2023 [10]. China therefore has no interest in seeing family farming, which focuses on producing food for domestic consumption, replace large-scale production for export.

However well-intentioned, the MST's scope for ending hunger in Brazil within the confines of capitalist law means that even if their land reform were successful, they wouldn't be able to eradicate the problems inherent in the capitalist system.

Because their demands are popular and they have formed a very large organisation, they shouldn't be ignored, but communists must help these workers and peasants to realise through their own experience that it is by taking control of the large agricultural estates, rather than by forming small and medium-sized farms, that they can really tackle the problem of hunger and poverty.

"The workers say to the peasants: We shall help you reach "ideal" capitalism, for equal land tenure is the idealisation of capitalism by the small producer. At the same time we shall prove to you its inadequacy and the necessity of passing to farming in common." - Lenin, The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky, Subservience To The Bourgeoisie In The Guise of "Economic Analysis"

To demonstrate why modest land redistribution isn't sufficient. it is important to acknowledge that small-scale agriculture cannot produce enough to eradicate hunger. Covering 67% of the rural area in Brazil, family farming is responsible for 70% of the food consumed domestically but accounts for only 23% of the Gross Value of Agricultural Production (GVA) [11]. If smallholders occupied 100% of rural land, hunger would still not be completely eradicated. They simply cannot produce the same volume as large farms with modern technology.

To truly eradicate hunger, organisations like the MST and the workers and peasants that form it, mustn't fight for modest land reforms. A genuine communist party needs to lead these workers and peasants towards the goal of achieving socialism. Only socialism can bring the full power of large-scale agriculture out of the hands of

private landowners and under the democratic control of the workers, with state planning capable of directing production to fulfil its social purpose of feeding people rather than making a profit.

Cooperation between capitalist countries will never be able to tackle world hunger effectively. Brazil has a semi-dependant relationship that is designed to make profit for both its "own" capitalists and those of the stronger imperialists. The states are run by or in the service of the capitalists and will always work towards their interests. Ending world hunger is not a profitable venture, and so it will never be in the interests of the capitalists to solve this problem.

Join Politsturm and help work towards the building of a party that can really end world hunger, by ending the class relations that give rise to it.

Sources: [1](#)/[2](#)/[3](#)/[4](#)/[5](#)/[6](#)/[7](#)/[8](#)/[9](#)/[10](#)/[11](#)/[12](#)/[13](#)

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