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SHORT COMMUNICATION

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2021: PRESIDENT BOLSONARO AND HIS MINISTRY OF TRUTH

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ABSTRACT

This text analyzes Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro speech during the 76th session of the UN General Assembly, 21 September 2021. It points out the threats to indigenous rights and to the environment foreseen in the federal Constitution.

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In 1949, George Orwell wrote the book 1984 which described a dystopian world. The apparatus of Oceania's government was divided into four Ministries: Truth, Peace, Love and Plenty (1). In the 76th session of the UN General Assembly, 21 September 2021 (2), Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro seemed to speak based on the concepts of the Ministry of Truth.

In his speech, Bolsonaro presented an inversion of reality. His administration's omissions about COVID-19 pandemic, the deforestation of the Amazon and the violations of indigenous rights seem to have been thrown into the memory hole. His mismanagement was rewritten as a humanitarian, sanitary and environmental responsibility.

In his three speeches at the UN (2019, 2020 and 2021) he has been defending the Amazon and the Original Peoples. At the same time, he emphasizes that Brazilian indigenous peoples are interested in the economic exploitation of their lands through agribusiness and mining.

His argument is used in favor of the timeframe thesis on the demarcation of indigenous lands, which is being judged by the Supreme Court. This thesis is defended by the Bolsonaro administration, and it states that the territorial rights of indigenous peoples can only be claimed for lands that were occupied on October 5, 1988, which was the date of the enactment of the Brazilian Constitution.

The position adopted by the Bolsonaro administration in regard to the constitutional rights of indigenous peoples has aggravated their living

conditions, especially during the pandemic (3). Today loggers, miners and ruralists attack indigenous people and the environment in the Amazon.

These attacks have increased significantly across the Amazon since the election of Bolsonaro (4). Bolsonaro has encouraged a new wave of cultural destruction, which began in 1492 (5) with the extermination of indigenous peoples and their historical significance.

The Amazon needs urgent measures against its socio-environmental devastation. The Supreme Court will not just judge the time frame. Its decision will set the courses for the ongoing authoritarianism in Brazil. This judgment will indicate the directions of the indigenous experience, which means an experience of communion, involvement and sharing of the land, according to the Brazilian indigenous thinker Ailton Krenak (6). We hope the history of indigenous peoples echo in the votes of the STF ministers and their constitutional rights are guaranteed as well as 2021 represents a milestone of humanization and democracy for Brazilian institutions.

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