

Religions for democracy say Direct Elections Now

Silence, neutrality and a lack of reflection are not options for people who have faith, particularly when the lives of the underprivileged are threatened. The severity of what Brazil is currently experiencing demands seriousness and serenity, so that Brazilian society retrieves its political dignity. This is a legitimate path to exercise citizenship, participate in the struggle and secure its rights. The practice of day-to-day politics, which problematizes relationships of power and inequalities, is a sure path for us to reinstate ethics in politics. Manipulations and distortions to meet the interests of oligarchies and financial capital are not feasible. Politics is not corruption. Politics is not betrayal. Politics is talking about life and participation.

A crisis of institutionality has been created in Brazil for some time and President Dilma Rousseff's impeachment has intensified this context. It is critical that institutions' functions and relevance are retrieved. They should not be subordinated to the interests of profit and power. Public institutions should guarantee policies which take into account the right to land, universal access to health and education, a dignified retirement and labour safeguards. Therefore, we understand that proposals for constitutional reforms need to be revoked immediately: freezing social investment for twenty years; the total outsource of labour; labour reform, which envisages that workers negotiate directly with their employers without trade unions being present, exposing those who work to every type of harassment, and the end to retirement. They cannot be accepted because they were imposed arbitrarily and without any discussions with society. We reaffirm that our role is to be alongside the people who will be directly affected by these measures, which harm human dignity.

The evidence made public on 17th May, 2017 is not accusations; it shows the lack of political authority, ethics and morality of a government which was not elected to lead solutions to the economic, social and environmental crisis that we are experiencing.

Everyone is called on to take on responsibilities. It is time for action, to promote reflections and take part everywhere, in every institution and groups of people of faith, for us to attain a democratic course - with distribution of income, taxation of large fortunes and a state of social well-being which respects the separation between religion and the State.

Therefore, we are announcing that we have signed a commitment to:

- Direct elections in 2017 and that there are general elections to avoid arrangements which exclude the majority of the people from the Nation's courses and reinstate the legitimate bases of our democracy;
- The explicit task of any newly elected leader of submitting all the reforms made to a popular referendum and suppressing those underway, which took place without the broad participation of society and without legitimacy;

- The demand for political and public commitment from any elected leader to elections for an independent National Constituent Assembly of National Congress in 2018, so that we can reaffirm commitment to our present and future, principally reforming the political structures of representation in the country;
- Action against every parliamentarian elected in the name of faith, who makes up the political base of allies of this illegitimate government to conduct so many atrocities against the people in a fundamentalist and capitalist manner.

For Dignity! For Reform of the Political System! For Democracy!
#PelaFéMeComprometo #DiretasJá