

## **Why do we not let go of Lula's candidacy**

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Brasil 247, 8 May 2018

<https://www.brasil247.com/pt/colunistas/gleisihoffmann/354142/Por-que-n%C3%A3o-abrimos-m%C3%A3o-da-candidatura-Lula.htm> (in Portuguese)

Lula is innocent. We know his life dedicated to the Brazilian people, and we know the vices, failures and arbitrariness of the process that condemned him. Police officers, prosecutors and partial judges acted with a political focus, in complicity with Globo Network and the mainstream media, to get Lula out of the electoral process. Lula was arrested in a hasty and illegal manner, before the final sentence in the second instance. It was a decision that will certainly be canceled in the near future.

Lula brings with him the hope and confidence of the most expressive part of the Brazilian people, who want to vote for their leader next October, despite persecution and arbitrary arrest. The vast majority of the population knows that the rush to arrest him has served his political opponents, who do not accept the electoral victories of Lula and PT.

We confirm this perception through serious, quantitative and qualitative polls. Most respondents say that arbitrary detention serves the "big guys," who want to earn more without Lula in government, to sectors of the judicial system that "play the game of Lula's opponents and want to draw attention", and to the media, that "pays too much attention on Lula and only shows one side".

Lula's electorate, who is a large majority in all polls, expects PT and its leaders to make their uncompromising defense and to guarantee the viability of his candidacy, in order to fill the political void that would exist without him, in an election that will occur at a time so difficult and troubled in national life.

Lula's arrest in no way alters PT's right to apply for registration of his candidacy until August 15. Whatever happens, there is no legal margin for its early dismissal, contrary to what Globo's commentators say.

Even a supposed provisional ineligibility can be revoked at any time, according to the law and the antecedents of the Electoral Justice and the Supreme Court (Constitutional Court, STF), even after the election. This is what guarantees Lula the right to be candidate, as it states an opinion subscribed by the jurist Luiz Fernando Casagrande Pereira, specialist in electoral law, which no one has refuted up to now (read here).

If Lula is innocent, if most of the people want to vote for him, if in the light of the Constitution his political rights are assured, why should we fail to present him as a candidate? It would be to play the game of their executioners, who want an election without Lula, and thus intend to show a democratic normality to a flawed dispute, due to the absence of the greatest Brazilian popular leader.

It will not be us, from the PT, to surrender and give up our leader!

In addition, for those who try to anticipate a supposed ineligibility, by adhering to the "Clean Sheet Act" \*, observe Article 26 C, as well as court judgments based on it. Whenever there is plausibility in the appeal brought against conviction, ineligibility must be suspended. Recently, Lula's defense appealed to the Federal Court (STJ) and the STF against the decision of the Regional Court of the Fourth Region (TRF4). Even those who find the TRF4 decision defensible recognize that Lula's resources have legally plausible theses.

We know about the political and historical responsibility we have with the country. That is why we will persist in Lula's candidacy until the end. PT has always been able to walk the paths along with people, and it will not be at this moment that we will be guided by evaluations dictated from outside.

Lula is much greater than the prison he is in, as a human being and as a leader. He has been 30 days in prison and is still present in the national political scene. They could not get him out of the country's day-to-day life, nor trivialize his prison or make him invisible.

We respect and recognize the legitimate right of all other candidates, especially those of the left and center-left, with whom we maintain a permanent dialogue. We will undoubtedly be together at the conclusion of the electoral process. However, through experience, legacy, and popular expression, Lula will be the one able to repair the country's course by pacifying it and rescuing the dignity of the Brazilian people.

\* *Lei da Ficha Limpa* in Portuguese: it avoids anyone to be candidate for an eight-year period if: a) his/her mandate is revoked; b) he/she resigns in order to avoid cassation; or c) he/she is convicted by a collegiate body, even with the possibility of appeals.