Dear NWSA Community,

We are shocked, appalled, and saddened by the recent turn of events in Brazil which is nothing short of a near total erosion of the Brazilian democratic project. We join our colleagues from the Social Sciences and Humanities in Brazil in condemning the State’s moves to repress the free expression of ideas within Brazilian universities. We repudiate attempts to criminalize as “terrorism” political and activist organizations such as the Landless Workers Movement (MST) and the land-titled Indigenous and former maroon communities (called Quilombolas). We repudiate the attacks on public education in which teachers who refuse only to teach creationism are being charged with “Marxist indoctrination.” We repudiate the persecution of LGBTQI, Feminist and Black scholars throughout Brazil’s public education system, including higher education.

We condemn the incoming government’s objective of supporting violence against Black, LGBTQI, and Indigenous citizens through allowing (nearly) unrestricted gun sales to begin after January 1, 2019, and to protect perpetuators of violence through a promise of legal non-prosecution. 387 killings targeting Brazil’s LGBTQI communities were perpetrated in 2017, making Brazil one of the most hostile countries in the world for LGBTQI people. Brazil is a world leader in the murder of human rights and environmental defenders. The high-profile public, extra-judicial murder of Rio de Janeiro council woman Marielle Franco, a beloved and highly respected Black Lesbian Feminist and mother, is an example of how quickly things have deteriorated in Brazil within the last year. In this context of unchecked groups of ex-military and police vigilantes assassinating Brown, Black, and LGBTQI youth, the promise to implement additional laws, such as those providing police the right to shoot to kill civilians without prosecution, will exponentially increase the murder rate of these populations.

Given the lack of media coverage of this crisis, which is largely a result of a global veiling of Brazil behind the mask of Carnival and “racial democracy,” we encourage our members to establish networks of solidarity while educating themselves about this dire political crisis that is unfolding as you read this. The following are some links to begin learning about the current crisis:


https://www.democracynow.org/2018/10/31/as_bolsonaro_threatens_to_criminalize_protests


https://www.alternet.org/world/bolsonaro-brazil-slayer-amazon


https://www.liberationnews.org/brazil-ninguem-solta-a-mao-de-ninguem-no-one-let-go-of-anyones-hand/


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