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URGENT ACTION

Subject: Illegal arrest of LCP activists in northern Minas Gerais

The Cebraspo received another serious complaint about persecution of peasant leaders of the LCP (Poor Peasants' League), now in northern Minas Gerais, southeast of Brazil. The coordinators Wanderson Antonio and Flavia Avelina, both popular educators, were arrested, falsely charged as illegal possession of weapons. These tricks are used by the apparatus of State repression to criminalize and repress people's movements and their activists.

Flavia Avelina was kept for 8 days in an old prison's warehouse of the city of Manga, northern Minas Gerais, under sub-human conditions, where there wasn't bathroom, without the minimum conditions that needed to maintain personal integrity with physical and mental health. In the night of Friday, January 22th, she was transferred to a prison in the city of Montalvânia, without the knowledge of her lawyer and family.

The coordinators are councils of the Poor Peasants' League, working in support of education of youth and adults in the field, and in the organization of training courses for the peasants movement. They are very new in that region. Recently they received threats, even of death threats, and now they are arrested with that false charge.

The judge already have documents which indicates that the coordinators have a fixed address and they never had others charges. But, last Friday, the judge requested additional documents, not related with the case, as a condition to assess the freedom petition.

This is a clear intention to postpone the release of the coordinators and to gain time for new charges, an attitude constantly repeated with the poor people and social fighters. As it was not enough, the case was transferred to another judge, who unduly asked for other documents, thus maintaining a political and arbitrary imprisonment.

The combative peasant movement, in Brazil, has been facing a persecution by landowners and their armed gangs, and also by legal and repressive apparatus of the State.

Therefore, the Cebraspo calls all to spread this denounce and reject that latest attack against the people's struggle in Brazil and their leaders, and urge for the release of the activists.

Thus, we urge everyone to send protest e-mails to these institutions:

1. Paulo Vannuchi (Minister of Especial Human Rights Secretariat):
direitoshumanos@sedh.gov.br
2. Gercino José da Silva Filho (National Agrarian Ombudsman):
gercino.filho@mda.gov.br
3. Gilberto Carvalho (Chief of Presidency's Office): gabpr@planalto.gov.br
4. Luiz Couto (President of Human Rights Comission of the Deputy's Chamber): dep.luizcouto@camara.gov.br

Copy to Cebraspo: cebraspo@gmail.com