

"Lula libre": Da Silva's one-year protest in Brazil behind bars

This Sunday, former President Lula da Silva served a year in prison for the corruption case known as "Lava Jato." On the first anniversary, supporters protested in the streets to demand the freedom of the PT leader.



Lula is serving a 12-year sentence for corruption and money laundering. The prosecution says it received an apartment on the beach from a construction company in exchange for a lucrative contract with the oil company Petrobras. His imprisonment is part of a highly divisive debate among Brazilians who see him as a political prisoner for defending the poor and those who believe that justice was done with a corrupt politician. In the article, the ex-president also pointed to President Jair Bolsonaro as the main beneficiary of the «political persecution» that the right-wing movements have

carried out against him.

« Every day that I spent here increased my indignation, but I maintain my faith in a fair trial in which the truth will prevail. I can sleep with a clear conscience of my innocence, »said Lula in the article. The 73-year-old former president, who ruled Brazil for the Workers Party between 2003 and 2010, was put behind bars on April 7 last year by Judge Sergio Moro, who was then leading the Lava Jato operation and who is now the Minister of Justice and Public Security of the Government of Bolsonaro. «Lula has been kidnapped by the bourgeoisie,» said another of the speakers, João Pedro Stedile, leader of the leftist Rural Landless Workers Movement.

«The rescue to pay is that we stop fighting. » One of the protesters, Beth Dori, 65, said Lula's arrest was unfair. Meanwhile, on the promenade of Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro Lula's imprisonment was celebrated during a demonstration in favor of the fight against corruption. «Today is the full year that Lula has not stolen!» Shouted a protester from the top of a vehicle equipped with loudspeakers, before which the attendees burst into ovation.

Lula is the most senior person to be imprisoned in the anti-corruption investigation «Operation Self-Washing», which has involved dozens of high-level businessmen and politicians. «I am here to ask for the dismissal of the corrupt Supreme Federal Court. While the court is corrupt, Lula and other corrupt politicians have an opportunity to get out, »said Yasmín Albudane, a 24-year-old university student.