



The Pastoral Land Commission – National Communication Office PRESS

RELEASE

Brazilian rural area is on fire

2019 will go down in history as a year of great tragedies.

Early in the month of January, the Córrego do Feijão dam, owned by the mining company Vale, broke in Brumadinho (MG): 272 people were buried alive under an avalanche of mud. Villages were shattered, small crops and livestock were destroyed, and the water was completely contaminated.

In the middle of the year, the fire destroyed forests. While the whole world rose up against the destruction of the Amazon, essential for the balance of the planet, ranchers and landowners were plotting the day of fire.

Towards the end of the year, oil invaded the coast of almost all states in the Northeast of Brazil. It greatly affected the lives of riverine and artisanal fishermen.

From speech to practice

The Brazilian president's speech against quilombolas, indigenous peoples, traditional communities may well explain the progress of violence in the rural area in 2019 compared to 2018:

- 14% increase in the number of murders - from 28 to 32;
- 7% increase in assassination attempts - 28 to 30;
- 22% growth in death threats - 165 to 201.

Conflicts break record

- **CPT recorded 1,833 conflicts in the rural area in 2019.** Number 23% higher than in 2018 and the highest number recorded by CPT in the last 5 years. This

number is equivalent to an average of 5 conflicts each day. Of the 1,254 land conflicts recorded, 1,206 occurrences of land conflicts involved some form of violence, caused by alleged landowners and / or land grabbers. **This was the highest number of land conflicts recorded by the CPT since 1985.** Evictions increased in the South (450%), Midwest (114%) and North (55%).

Women involved in the struggle

102 women suffered violence. Of this total, 3 were murdered, 47 were threatened with death, 3 were attempted murder, 5 were arrested, 15 were intimidated.

Amazon: violence skyrockets

As in past years, the largest numbers of conflicts and violence in the rural area are concentrated in the Legal Amazon

But in 2019, the situation worsened.

In relation to 2018, increase of:

17% in the number of conflicts over land;

36% in the number of families involved;

82% of evicted families;

56% in destroyed goods;

72% in destroyed tillage;

29% in the number of families threatened by gunfire; 55% in the number of families that suffered some type of invasion of their home or possession.

There was a decrease in the number of evicted families and houses destroyed.

In the Amazon, in 2019, there were:

84% of murders, 27 out of 32;

73% of assassination attempts, 22 out of 30;

79% of those threatened with death, 158 people out of a total of 201.

60% of conflicts over land;

71% of families involved in conflicts;

57% of evicted families;

84% of the families that suffered some invasion of land or home.

A beautiful text by Eliane Brum, in *Conflitos no Campo Brasil 2019*, helps us to understand the logic of all this violence in the Amazon and the drastic consequences on the lives of the peoples.

The measures that different governments have been taking with the speech of land regularization in the Amazon is a “legalization of crime and the awarding to the criminals, the land grabber will soon no longer need to entice any public official. Crime becomes law. Following the path of Rio's militias, land grabbing in the Amazon is no longer a parallel power with ramifications in the State to become the State itself... In short: you steal from public property, destroy the Amazon rainforest and, a year later, become a landowner legalized and will enjoy life as a 'good citizen' ”, analyzed the author.

In this current scenario, indigenous people are the enemy

Conflitos no Campo Brasil 2019, for the first time, brings a text written by an indigenous woman, Sônia Guajajara. Sônia is from the Guajajara indigenous people of Maranhão. She is part of the Executive Coordination of the *Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil* – APIB.

In her text she explains the attacks against the rights of indigenous people in this first year of Bolsonaro's government. According to her, "since the inauguration of Jair

Bolsonaro in the presidency of the Republic, in January 2019, we have suffered an intense and serious offensive against the rights of indigenous peoples in Brazil."

CPT data confirm Sonia's speech. Indigenous people were involved:

in 244 occurrences of conflict over land, 20% of the total;

9 indigenous people were murdered, 7 of which were leaders. This was the largest number of indigenous leaders killed in the past 11 years.

9 suffered assassination attempts; 39 were threatened with death;

11 assaulted; 10 injured; and 16 were bullied in some way.

Of every three families in conflict over land, 1 was indigenous, 49,750 indigenous families out of a total of 144,742 families, 34%.

This was the category with the largest number of families involved in the struggle for land.

320 indigenous families were expelled by the 'owners' of the land, 31% of the total expelled families; 930 were evicted by justice, 9%;

26,621 suffered some form of invasion of land or houses, 67% of the 39,697.

Demonstrations: 142% increase, 2019 is the year with the highest number ever recorded by the CPT

One of the data that draws attention in the records that the CPT carried out in 2019 is in relation to the demonstrations. 1,301 events were registered with the participation of about 243,712 people, an average of 3.5 events per day. This represents an increase of 142% in relation to 2018, which registered 538 manifestations. It is also the highest number ever recorded by CPT in the 34 editions of *Conflitos no Campo Brasil*.

The region that registered the highest number of demonstrations was the Northeast region, with 516. This is equivalent to about 40% of the total demonstrations held in the

country in 2019, according to CPT data. Southeast and South continue with 251 and 223 manifestations respectively. According to the number of participants in the demonstrations, the Northeast was also the region where more people were mobilized (106,451), followed, this time, by the South Region (52,950).

The data that point to the Northeast the region with the largest number of demonstrations and people involved in demonstrations are consistent with the movement seen in the 2018 presidential elections, when the Region was opposed to the project of the current President of the Republic. Bolsonaro lost the vote in all northeastern states.

The demonstrations took place in all Units of the Federation (UF). The State of Bahia (162) concentrated the largest number of demonstrations in the year, followed by the States of Minas Gerais (131), Rio Grande do Sul (104), Paraná (91) and Maranhão (84).

The destruction of life revealed by Water Conflicts in 2019

One of the major causes of conflict in the rural area concerns water. In 2019, the number of water conflicts soared - 489 conflicts, involving 69,793 families - 77% more in number of conflicts, compared to 2018. **It is the largest number of water conflicts ever recorded by the CPT.**

From 2002 to 2014, the annual average was 65 conflicts, comprising 27,500 families. From 2015 to 2019, the average reached 254 conflicts, approximately 53 thousand families. The growth corresponds to the period in which the coup against President Dilma Rousseff was being planned and executed, and Michel Temer assumed the presidency. From 2017 to 2018, conflicts went from 197 to 276. They reached their peak in the first year of Jair Bolsonaro's government, 489!

Water conflicts are caused by mining, by entrepreneurs from different sectors, by hydroelectric plants and by the action or inaction of the federal, state and city governments. Of the 489 conflicts recorded in 2019: 189 were caused by mining, 39%; 177 by entrepreneurs, 36%; 54 by hydroelectric plants, 11%; 33 by governments, 7%.

In the conflicts caused by mining, there were 40 cases of violence: aggression (6); mercury contamination (7); death threats (4); damage (5); humiliation (3); intimidation (2); deaths as a result of conflict (8); omission or connivance (5).

Three states, Minas Gerais, Bahia and Sergipe, together account for 61%, 298 of the total conflicts. Minas Gerais (128); Bahia (101) and Sergipe (69). Among those involved in water conflicts: 41% are fishermen (199 cases); 22% are riverside (106 cases); 9% are smallholders (43 cases); 6% are quilombolas (31 cases).

Further information:

www.cptnacional.org.br

Facebook: @CPTNacional

Twitter: @cptnacional