

## **Statement: Democracy and Rule of Law in Brazil**

Geneva, Switzerland, June 25, 2019

It is with dismay and concern that we received the news from Brazil about the allegations of highly controversial and politicized collusion between the chief prosecutor of the anti-corruption operation “Car Wash” and the judge responsible for the case, who is currently the Minister of Justice of Brazil. This new political event has added to the wave of negative problems Brazil has been experiencing since June 2016, when the former president, Dilma Rousseff, was ousted from her position in a dubious impeachment process, and where the same judge illegally recorded calls from President Rousseff in a saga that involved several politicians and the corporate media.

Since this pushback against democracy in Brazil, political violence has claimed hundreds of lives. Extrajudicial, summary and arbitrary executions are increasingly targeting human rights defenders, social and political leaders, indigenous peoples, afro-descendants, women and LGBTI people. Racism, xenophobia, hatred of impoverished people, homophobia and misogyny are increasing at all levels, in some cases even being promoted by high-level government authorities.

ACT Alliance members in Brazil are concerned by the worsening state of democracy in the country, and are being affected by the violent reaction against human rights and the rule of law, the shrinking space for civil society, the decrease in the impartiality and freedom of the press, and the increase in corruption and political positions that lack transparency.

ACT Alliance expects the Brazilian judicial system to be based on lawful practices, and that all judges be impartial, fair and unbiased and follow the laws and the Brazilian Constitution. It also expects that the decision to ensure democratic precepts is based on law, and not on pressure from economic, religious or political groups. The breach of prerogatives of independence and impartiality of the judiciary may lead to political and ideological use of the judicial system and must be denounced.

ACT Alliance welcomes the disclosure by the media of the systematic deceit conducted by public servants. The public has the right to know, and civil society has the obligation to denounce injustices as a way of strengthening democracy by holding governments and institutions accountable.

Therefore, ACT Alliance urges the Brazilian institutions to conduct a proper investigation on the collusion case and to revert serious wrongdoing, unethical behavior, and illegal practices carried out by public servants that jeopardize democracy, human rights and the rule of law. We call the Brazilian Federal Supreme Court to expedite investigation and restoration of justice in all processes that were unlawfully implemented. That is a fundamental step to ensure a democratic, peaceful and inclusive society.

ACT Alliance is a coalition of 155 churches and church-related organizations working together in over 125 countries to create positive and sustainable change in the lives of poor and marginalized people regardless of their religion, politics, gender, sexual orientation, race or nationality in keeping with the highest international codes and standards. ACT Alliance is supported by 30,000 staff from member organizations and mobilizes about \$3 billion for its work each year in three targeted areas: humanitarian aid, sustainable development and advocacy.