

Indigenous activist says the Amazon would become a desert if Bolsonaro wins

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Sonia Guajajara (C) at the Santo Andre Municipal Chamber, Brazil, Aug. 11, 2022. | Photo: Twitter/ @GuajajaraSonia

Brasilia, August 16 (RHC)-- Indigenous leader Sonia Guajajara -- one of the world's 100 most influential personalities according to Time magazine -- said that she will seek a seat in Congress to put an end to the project of environmental destruction promoted by President Jair Bolsonaro and the Brazilian right.

"If Bolsonaro wins, the future of the Amazon will be tragic. The Amazon will become a true desert," she warned, adding that she is confident of a victory for former President Lula da Silva in the October 2nd

elections.

In 2018, Guajajara made history by being the first Indigenous woman to be nominated for the vice presidency of Brazil. Currently, the candidate for lawmaker for the state of Sao Paulo is sponsored by the Socialism and Freedom Party (PSOL).

The coordinator of the Articulation of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB) seeks to form the first Indigenous caucus in the Lower House, which is currently controlled by center-right parties linked to large agribusiness companies and evangelical movements. "We are going to try to get to the place where decisions are made," she said, recalling that the Lower House has only one Indigenous lawmaker, Joenia Wapichana, a woman elected in 2018.

Sonia Guajajara's tweet reads: "The response from the streets is clear: Get out Bolsonaro! Yesterday we went out to defend democracy and elections in the country. Let's go forward!"

"It is a very difficult mission... We are concerned about fighting against the destruction of Indigenous policies, the liberation of mining activities, deforestation, and the sale of our territories," Guajajara said, referring to what Bolsonaro has done since 2019.

"He is the main enemy of the Indigenous peoples... It would have been better if Bolsonaro had completely forgotten us," she pointed out, mentioning the political persecution against environmental defenders and social activists.

Guajajara's hopes are shared by millions of Brazilians. On Monday, the FSB Research Institute published a survey showing that the Workers' Party candidate has 45 percent of the voting intentions. Instead, former Captain Bolsonaro only reaches 34 percent of citizen preferences.

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