

The tragedy of brazilian coronavirus/ covid-19: An analysis of the federal government's misgovernment, 2020-2021.

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Executive summary

This document, presented as a subsidy to the Brazilian Congressional Committee of Inquiry (CCI) on the responses of the Federal Government of President Jair Messias Bolsonaro to the coronavirus pandemic and the Covid-19 explosion, is divided into six parts, plus a brief introduction. They deal with 1) the general political response of the Executive Branch of the Federal Government to the crisis; 2) the actions of the STF (Supreme Federal Court) and the Judiciary in its course; 3) the functioning of the Legislative Branch and its response to the misgovernment of the Executive Branch of the Federal Government; 4) the budget for combating the health and economic crises; 5) the actions of the Ministry of Health in the pandemic; 6) the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the consequent international isolation of Brazil during the pandemic.

The document shows how, given a negationist perspective on the part of the Executive Branch, a worldview rooted in biological and social Darwinism, the obsession of the President of the Republic with his project for re-election in 2022, and irresponsible behavior, whether in relation to health or the economy, Brazil was submerged in an unprecedented tragedy in our history. The health crisis – and its economic ramifications – was obviously serious, but the political choices of the President led us to one of the worst situations in the world in terms of cases and deaths, with the management of the crisis proving disastrous. As if these crises were not enough, the President has made an effort to produce a political crisis, due to his authoritarian behavior and his search for confrontation with everyone who disagrees with him. The document shows how the conflict with the other entities of the federation – governors and mayors – further complicated the management of the crisis, due to the direct responsibility of the President. Next, it details the decisive role of the Supreme Court and the Judiciary in general in ensuring that the subnational governments could act during the pandemic with a certain autonomy and thus partially supply the country with the necessary measures to combat the disease that was spreading. Finally, we focus on the responses of

the Legislative Branch – in particular with the functioning of the Remote Congress – as well as on the opportunity to rescue Brazilian democracy that the present CCI represents.

The document goes into detail about the “War Budget” approved by the parliament, which provided the Federal Government with resources to face the pandemic, with regard to sanitary issues and the health of the population, as well as to the economic effects generated by the pandemic. Some of the measures adopted – such as the Emergency Aid – were not even of the Federal Government’s initiative, but the fact is that it did not use a good part of the resources set aside for fighting the pandemic and supporting the economy. It failed to mobilize resources provided by the budget approved for 2020, with the 2021 budget now showing itself to be totally insufficient to continue to adequately address the crisis. Following this analysis, the document deals with the performance of the Ministry of Health. This can only be defined as disastrous from the moment it was taken over by General Eduardo Pazuello. Tacitly maintaining the President’s denialism, which had led to the resignation of the previous ministers, partially and poorly using budget resources, failing even to forecast and provide basic inputs for the functioning of the SUS (Single Health System) – crucial in any case in confronting Covid-19, despite its chronic underfunding –, delaying the purchase of vaccines and the immunization of the population, the minister contributed decisively to the magnitude of the tragedy. The document concluded with an analysis of the no less fateful performance of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, which, from the conflict with the Chinese government to the international isolation of Brazil, also contributed to the many cases and deaths that have befallen the Brazilian people since March 2020.

This document cannot but reach the conclusion that the actions of the Federal Government and, in particular, of the President of the republic must lead, on the part of this CPI and of the National Congress, to their political and administrative accountability. The President of the republic and his government have systematically cultivated neglect and tragedy. The human and constitutional rights of Brazilians have been systematically disrespected in this crisis. It is imperative that the appropriate measures be taken.

Introduction

At the turn of 2019 to 2020, the world was faced with what, in the following months, would become a pandemic of enormous proportions and the ensuing health, as well as economic, crisis. From China, the coronavirus and its related disease - SARS-2 Covid-19 – took the world by storm, creating a terrible situation for all countries and the people of the planet. But the responses, and their spirit, were not homogeneous: each country dealt with the crisis more effectively or less chaotically, with more concern for its citizens or contempt for life. Under the government of President Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil has unfortunately come to locate itself radically in the latter category. In fact, a great tragedy has descended upon us. Evidently, no country could go through the current pandemic unscathed, but the management of the crisis in our country was done according to an absurd negationist credo, through unwillingness and deliberate contradiction to science and rational measures that could prevent the spread of the coronavirus and its virulent impact, with radical disregard for the life of the population, as well as for their material welfare, despite a supposed defense of the economy. This shows itself to be fallacious if the pandemic is treated lightly and the recovery of the economy becomes more distant.

The resilience of the Brazilian society, demonstrated in the crises we face, has been undermined by the intentional action of the President and the Executive Branch in general. We have already more than 400,000 deaths, with an average daily death toll of more than 3,000, perhaps soon reaching 500,000! A research produced by the Lowy Institute (an Australian institute with a conservative profile) pointed to Brazil in the last place among 98 countries in terms of public policies to fight the pandemic. This assessment is shared by the reliable international organization Doctors Without Borders, according to its Director General, and to research published in the prestigious journal *Science*.¹

As we will see, the response to the health and economic crisis, with its political ramifications, fully justifies the impeachment of the President, Jair Messias Bolsonaro.

A massive violation of fundamental human rights has thus far been verified in Brazil, with contempt for its most basic principles, especially the sacred right to life – the State's responsibility – and the right to health – a fundamental element of the Brazilian Constitution. In addition to this, there is a clear inclination towards authoritarianism on the part of President Bolsonaro and many in his government, who thus position themselves against democracy and political, civil, economic, and social rights. They seek to restrict the actions of state and local governments, they suggest the implementation of a State of Siege for no objective reason,

which would paralyze the National Congress and authorize various authoritarian measures, they defy the Federal Supreme Court (STF) and threaten and harass those who disagree with the way the crisis is being faced – or in fact is not being faced, certainly contrary to what should be done. Research produced by Conectas Brazil, a non-governmental human rights organization, in partnership with the School of Public Health at the University of São Paulo (USP), showed that the Bolsonaro government has executed an institutional strategy aimed at spreading Covid-19.²

As if this were not enough, Brazil has been involved in huge conflicts with China, which has made it difficult to access the necessary inputs for the production of vaccines, which exist only because two important national scientific institutions – the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz) and the Butantan Institute – have embarked on the endeavor to produce them as soon as possible in Brazil.

This document, with the texts and references that compose it, seeks to present, in a succinct and substantiated way, the main steps of the misgovernment that pushed us into this tragedy. It aims to show how Brazil became a threat to global health, beyond being shown in a ridiculous way by the insistence of Federal Government authorities on useless and dangerous treatments (specifically chloroquine and ivermectin). It initially takes a snapshot of developments since March 2020, with a focus on the fight – or lack thereof – against coronavirus. It goes on to detail the role of parliament and the STF, as well as the Judiciary in general, in the course of the pandemic. It discusses the economic aspects of the state's response to the crisis, focusing on the federal budget, and delves into the chaos that poor government management has produced in the health system. Finally, it analyzes Brazil's insertion in the international sphere in the fight against the pandemic, in particular the problems generated by a bizarre view of China on the part of the Brazilian government.

Political and even criminal responsibilities must be determined in light of the tragedy that has befallen us, which, it is worth repeating, should by no means have reached the magnitude it has. Most of the deaths that have occurred since March 2020 could have been avoided and the population should not be facing this desperate economic and social situation. It is our conviction that the present Congress Commission of Inquiry (CCI) established in the Brazilian Federal Senate will do so fully, and here we make our circumspect contribution.

Finally, it is worth emphasizing that the text uses information and analyses based on the national and international press, on sources and documents, and on analyses made by respected specialists and national and international institutions. These are extensively documented in the footnotes to the text.

1. <https://interactives.lowyinstitute.org/features/covid-performance/#country-compare>; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/15/brazil-coronavirus-medecins-sans-frontieres-bolsonaro>; <https://oglobo.globo.com/sociedade/governo-federal-o-maior-culpado-por-erros-na-pandemia-no-brasil-indica-estudo-publicado-na-revista-science-24971779>.

2. <https://www.conectas.org/publicacoes/download/boletim-direitos-na-pandemia-no-10>.

I. The political response of the Federal Executive to the coronavirus crisis

Since the beginning of the health crisis related to the coronavirus pandemic, a radical negationist response was the option of the Brazilian government from the beginning of its complicated confrontation. Not that everyone in the Federal Government, much less in state and local governments, shared this response. But it was the one chosen by President Jair Bolsonaro. It was, according to him, merely “mere flu.” There was not much to worry about. It was necessary, on the contrary, to keep the economy running. By no means would measures such as a lockdown and non-functioning of non-essential services or even milder restrictions on social mobility be necessary. At most, a specific type of social distancing was to be adopted, the supposed “vertical isolation,” in which the elderly were to be protected, with the rest of the population going on with their normal lives. As if Covid-19, a highly contagious systemic disease with disparate consequences according to individuals, but always potentially serious, including death, did not affect people of different ages. As if “shutting down” the economy was a plot hatched to damage the Federal Government, attack the President, and hinder his re-election bid in 2022. In addition, the idea that the virus was a Chinese strategy to damage the world and geopolitically strengthen that country was being propagated surreptitiously or openly, in which the Foreign Minister Ernesto Araújo and the President’s children, especially Congressman Eduardo Bolsonaro, took precedence.³

And, unfortunately, this will continue for a long time. The resilience of Brazil’s health system, especially the Unified Health System (SUS), and of society as a whole, including economically, is undermined and pushed to extremes from which it will be very difficult to recover.

3. For this and the next, see <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00139157.2021.1842710>; <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-55107536>; <https://saude.estadao.com.br/noticias/geral,destino-de-todo-mundo-diz-bolsonaro-sobre-mortos-brasil-bate-recorde-de-obitos-por-coronavirus,70003322827>; <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/equilibriosaude/2020/06/a-gente-lamenta-todos-os-mortos-mas-e-o-destino-de-todo-mundo-diz-bolsonaro.shtml>; <https://brasil.elpais.com/sociedade/2021-03-25/sem-controle-da-pandemia-brasil-se-torna-ameaca-mundial.html>; <https://g1.globo.com/politica/blog/valdo-cruz/post/2021/01/19/ataques-de-ernesto-araujo-a-china-podem-afetar-vinda-de-insumo-para-producao-de-vacina-no-brasil.ghtml>; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/03/brazil-covid-global-threat-new-more-lethal-variants-miguel-nicolelis>; <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-latin-america-56366477>; <https://www.nytimes.com/article/brazil-coronavirus-cases.html>; https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2021/04/08/brasil-une-situation-sanitaire-absolument-dramatique_6076001_3210.html; https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2021/04/13/face-a-la-menace-de-nouveaux-variants-du-covid-19-l-executif-se-resigne-a-suspendre-les-vols-en-provenance-du-brasil_6076659_823448.html.

Behind the kind of reasoning developed by the President – openly and publicly – there is also a particular conception of social life. As he more than once stated, with a disease situation like this, those who are most able to do so survive. The others, the weakest, pass away and that is how life is, and it simply goes on. One dies every day, everywhere, from various causes; coronavirus would be a detail (in fact perhaps even positive, one could say, if the strongest survive). This is a kind of biological Darwinism that no other head of state in the world has ever expressed. The right to life is thus totally unknown and even repudiated, discarding the most basic right that it is the State’s duty to guarantee, as enshrined in the Brazilian Constitution of 1988. Moreover, the President, also more than once, made a point of affirming that this is just the way things are: in every war, soldiers die. A distorted military mentality adds to biological Darwinism and informs the attitudes and decisions of the President of the Republic. This position is contrary, it must be stressed, even to the policies practiced by the Armed Forces, who protected their troops, as the then head of the Army’s General Personnel Department and the current Minister of this force, General Paulo Sérgio Nogueira de Oliveira, explained in an interview, partially responsible for the military crisis that occurred at the end of March 2021.

At no time – except already in mid-2020, without giving them prominence – did the President of the Republic express condolences to the Covid-19 dead, who were piling up at high speed, and to their families (apart from a fleeting and quick “I am sorry for all the deaths”). That is, as if it were not enough to disrespect the citizens’ fundamental human right to life, he did not show any empathy for victims and for those who have suffered along with them in the course of this tragedy.

The President of the Republic has decisively militated, from the beginning, against the measures recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and by science in general, by epidemiologists around the world, and even by his ministers of Health, as we will see below. He has taken a stand against the wearing of masks (which he generally refuses to wear), social distancing, any lockdowns (even partial ones), mass vaccination, spreading false information about the coronavirus and Covid-19. He repeatedly confronted the governors and in particular the governor of São Paulo, João Doria.⁴ He declared that he would not be vaccinated, despised the vaccine of Chinese origin – the CoronaVac –, whose national production the Bu-

4. <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2020/03/25/em-reuniao-sobre-coronavirus-bolsonaro-e-doria-trocam-acusacoes.ghtml>; <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2020/05/e-guerra-tem-que-jogar-pesado-com-governadores-diz-bolsonaro-a-empresarios.shtml>; <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2020/03/bolsonaro-perde-duelo-com-doria-e-governadores-encurralam-presidente.shtml>; <https://noticias.uol.com.br/saude/ultimas-noticias/redacao/2020/04/15/stf-tem-4-votos-a-favor-de-autonomia-de-governadores-durante-a-pandemia.htm>; https://www.terra.com.br/noticias/brasil/politica/bolsonaro-governadores-fizeram-a-festa-com-recursos_46c808980b65b71b182f4e3d30916976u43q47ul.html; <https://g1.globo.com/jornal-nacional/noticia/2021/04/13/stf-da-prazo-de-15-dias-para-bolsonaro-explicar-critica-a-prefeitos-e-governadores-na-pandemia.ghtml>.

tantan Institute timely agreed with that country. He focused solely on the Fiocruz partnership with Oxford University and AstraZeneca for the production of this pioneering vaccine, while refusing the offer of 70 million doses from Pfizer, of which 3 million could already have been delivered. In short, Brazil asked for fewer vaccines, incomprehensibly if it really wanted to curb the coronavirus, than the Covax Facility initiative could offer.⁵ In addition, The President has promoted, directly with his supporters and indirectly through his public statements, “social gatherings” that contribute decisively to the spread of the coronavirus.

Moreover, he recommended, without any scientific knowledge and against the opinion of scientists and doctors all over the planet, supposed early treatments, with (hydroxy)chloroquine – which he forced, in a gesture that can be qualified as administrative improbity, the Army to produce on a large scale – and a dewormer called ivermectin.⁶ As this supposed treatment was demoralized, the President started to defend another chimera – a hormonal blocker called proxalutamide, again in a totally irresponsible way.⁷ The former has side effects that can be fatal, hitting the heart of its users, the latter imposing risk to their livers if used excessively, or is at best useless. Almost openly, but mostly tacitly, President Jair Bolsonaro holds as a perspective for the health crisis the so-called “herd immunity.” This is considered unviable and condemned worldwide: because, supposing a gigantic level of contamination, it would also imply a lot of deaths, many more even than those, innumerable, that make up our tragedy today, also showing great cruelty to the victims of the disease. In this case, inaction was clearly matched by a real action that, behind the passivity of public policies, concealed unknowable objectives. The use of Fake News, contributing to misinformation, regarding these treatments reached many Brazilians desperate with the wild course of the pandemic among us, even leading to deaths.

5. <https://noticias.uol.com.br/ultimas-noticias/reuters/2020/12/15/bolsonaro-diz-que-nao-tomara-vacina-contra-a-covid-19.htm>; <https://saude.ig.com.br/2021-01-18/relembra-10-vezes-que-bolsonaro-ataca-a-coronavac.html>; <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/equilibriosaude/2021/03/governo-negou-3-vezes-ofertas-da-pfizer-e-perdeu-ao-menos-3-milhoes-de-doses-de-vacina.shtml>; <https://www.poder360.com.br/coronavirus/brasil-optou-por-cobertura-minima-ao-aderir-a-alianca-global-por-vacina/>.

6. https://www.em.com.br/app/noticia/politica/2021/01/05/interna_politica,1226054/ivermectina-bolsonaro-volta-a-defender-remedio-para-parasitas-contra-covid.shtml; <https://saude.estadao.com.br/noticias/geral/bolsonaro-diz-que-anvisa-vai-facilitar-acesso-a-hidroxicloroquina-e-ivermectina,70003398893>; <https://www.poder360.com.br/internacional/premie-frances-e-aplaudido-ao-usar-brasil-como-exemplo-negativo-de-uso-da-cloroquina/>; <https://noticias.uol.com.br/saude/ultimas-noticias/redacao/2021/03/11/bolsonaro-cloroquina.htm>; <https://epoca.globo.com/brasil/bolsonaro-liga-para-radio-defende-nebulizacao-de-cloroquina-em-paciente-com-covid-19-24935157>; <https://economia.uol.com.br/noticias/reuters/2020/03/21/bolsonaro-anuncia-aumento-de-producao-de-cloroquina-uso-contra-coronavirus-nao-e-comprovado.htm>; <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-55747043>; <https://valor.globo.com/empresas/noticia/2021/02/05/venda-de-remedios-do-kit-covid-movimentar-500-mi-em-2020.ghtml>.

7. <https://blogs.oglobo.globo.com/malu-gaspar/post/antes-de-estudo-pro-proxalutamida-pesquisadores-militaram-favor-da-cloroquina.html>.

As noted, not everyone in the Bolsonaro government espoused these perspectives.⁸ In particular, the then Minister of Health, physician and former Member of Congress, Luiz Henrique Mandetta, sought a rational response to the health crisis. He could not, therefore, accept the conceptions, attitudes, and policies assumed by the President. He thus sought to coordinate with the state governments, to promote a modicum of closure of the economy and circulation in the beginning of the pandemic, to help organize the curative and palliative response to the sick, to spread correct information and to guide the population, highlighting the importance of the SUS in the fight against the coronavirus. He aroused the jealousy and anger of the President and ultimately was fired. Nelson Teich, also a doctor, replaced him on April 17, 2020, but had no choice but to hand over the post on May 15, with nothing he could do, because he was not even allowed to plan with the states of the federation a decent combination of decreasing social circulation and running the economy, such was the obsession of the President with this theme.

The active-in duty Army General Eduardo Pazuello replaced Teich – with the motto that one must always obey one’s superiors, “one commands, the other obeys” – and in practice, although mostly silently, fundamentally followed the guidelines of his boss, the President of the Republic. Initially acting as interim Minister, in September he was sworn in. He disorganized the structure of the Ministry of Health, brought in countless military personnel to occupy positions for which they had no training and no knowledge, did not coordinate with governors and mayors, did not seek national health care protocols, committed very serious omissions – for which he is even accused by the Federal Audit Court (TCU) and the Federal Public Ministry (MPF) of administrative improbity. General Walter Braga Neto is in the same situation, due to the period in which he commanded, from the so-called Chief of Staff (the ministry that coordinates the actions of the civilian ministries), the Federal Government’s crisis committee. Tests were not used – going against a fundamental precept of fighting the virus: the discovery of cases and the isolation of carriers; vaccines were not bought, despite the early offer by companies (especially Pfizer) and the existence of resources made available by the War Budget; there was no planning; medicines, in particular the kit for intubation of patients, are in short supply; there was a lack of oxygen for the care of patients in Manaus, which resulted in the multiplication of deaths, even though the ministry had been informed of the problem, according to the accusations. Moreover, there was no communication strategy from the health

8. <https://noticias.uol.com.br/saude/ultimas-noticias/redacao/2020/03/28/covid-19-mandetta-contraria-bolsonaro-e-reforca-urgencia-de-parar-o-pais.htm>; <https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2020-04-04/mandetta-o-conservador-que-vestiu-o-colete-do-sus-e-entrincheirou-bolsonaro.html>; <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2020/04/16/mandetta-anuncia-em-rede-social-que-foi-demitido-do-ministerio-da-saude.ghtml>; <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/internacional-52316728>; <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2020/05/15/teich-deixa-o-ministerio-da-saude-antes-de-completar-um-mes-no-cargo.ghtml>.

portfolio to inform the population about the situation and real gravity of the pandemic, after Luiz Henrique Mandetta left office.⁹ Moreover, the drama registered in Manaus was replicated in other Brazilian cities.

Here is also another clear frontal disrespect to the human and fundamental rights of the Brazilian population during the pandemic: if the President disregarded the right to life, his government as a whole disrespected the human and constitutional right of Brazilian citizens to health. These are not trivial facts. Obviously, it is a difficult and complex situation, the fight against the pandemic and the treatment of Covid-19 – but this has not really been accomplished, except in an inadequate and limited manner, as well as begrudgingly. The new Minister of Health, physician Marcelo Queiroga, has yet to show what he is about, but he has already disappeared amidst the lack of effective measures, which are urgent given the magnitude of the crisis.

But most governors and a large number of mayors have also tried to act against the crisis according to the orientations of science. This explains why the Brazilian tragedy was not much greater. They produced partial lockdowns and tried to orient the population. The government of São Paulo, for example, negotiated the CoronaVac vaccine with China. As the duration of the pandemic lengthened, however, state and municipal governments progressively gave up restrictive measures, for which they also depended on the support – also financial – of the Federal Government. If the actions of the state in Brazil during the pandemic had remained in the hands of the Federal Government alone, we would probably be close to 1 million deaths by now. From this perspective, the decision of the STF was crucial, which reaffirmed the normative and administrative competence of states and municipalities, preventing the Federal Government from creating obstacles to state policies for the containment of the pandemic.

From the economic point of view, even with the support of Congress, the Federal Government entered late, in 2020, in the fight against the crisis, to a large extent reluctantly, but also taking advantage of initiatives that were not its own (see details in the next section). The suspension of contracts and salaries helped momentarily to reduce unemployment, but favored the companies more than the workers. Emergency credit was established but underused, as banks

did not make it available to small businesses and small entrepreneurs, with the Federal Government allowing this situation to set in.¹⁰ The main measure adopted by the Federal Government – the *Auxílio Emergencial* (Emergency Aid, an emergency cash transfer) – was in fact engineered by the National Congress, with the government hitchhiking on this initiative, which was the decisive element in keeping the economy from crashing. Once again demonstrating its contempt for the situation of the population and the lives of the people, the government left them without any aid between the beginning of the year and April 2021, creating a situation of deprivation and hunger perhaps never before seen in Brazil. Furthermore, as the waves of the pandemic succeed each other without us leaving the previous waves, the economy will not function properly again, as business people have already made clear. We are limping along waiting for a mass vaccination, which is proceeding more slowly than would be possible and necessary, since the health crisis not only continues to be in effect, but worsened considerably in March 2021, with a new omission by the President and of his government, except for the distribution of vaccines that were not manufactured due to his initiative. The false opposition between health and economy, between rights and welfare, is shown here in all its nefarious consequences and perversity. Worse yet: The Federal Government has not spent – not even on health – even close to the total resources of the War Budget that the National Congress enacted in 2020 to face the developing crisis.

As if the health and economic crises were not enough, the President has been systematically betting on a political crisis. As early as March 2020, he suggested the need to declare a State of Siege and govern by decree.¹¹ The National Congress, under the presidency of the Chamber of Deputies, Rodrigo Maia, rejected this initiative and frantically legislated to face the crisis, enacting the War Budget and other measures. The Remote Congress, with Legislative activity taking place online, allowed this to happen. Wanting to forbid state governors and mayors to face the crisis with the necessary measures and eventually even intervene, the President had his authoritarian initiatives stopped by the STF. The decisions of the STF allowed, above all, other subnational level governments to develop complementary measures to fight the pandemic (but in no way took away the responsibility of the President and the Executive Branch to be in the front line of this fight, as he later wanted to imply). The President's supporters – the so-called Bolsonaroistas – have thus launched themselves against the measures of the governors and mayors, openly encouraged by him, as well as against the STF, with demonstrations in which they even displayed fire-

9. <https://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/governo/bolsonaro-atrapalha-combate-a-pandemia-diz-o-ex-ministro-nelson-teich/>; <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2020/10/22/e-simples-assim-um-manda-e-o-outro-obedece-diz-pazuella-ao-lado-de-bolsonaro.ghtml>; <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2021/03/15/um-manda-o-outro-obedece-ja-disse-pazuella-sobre-bolsonaro-veja-frases-polemicas-do-ex-ministro.ghtml>; <https://brasil.elpais.com/noticias/eduardo-pazuella/>; <https://g1.globo.com/am/amazonas/noticia/2021/04/14/mpf-move-acao-contra-ex-ministro-pazuella-e-secretario-de-saude-do-am-por-responsabilidade-na-crise-de-oxigenio-no-estado.ghtml>; <https://politica.estadao.com.br/noticias/geral/tcu-aponta-omissoes-graves-de-pazuella-em-gestao-da-pandemia-e-sugere-punicao.70003681442>; <https://exame.com/brasil/braga-netto-entra-na-mira-do-tcu-por-omissao-no-enfrentamento-a-covid-19/>; <https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/ultimas-noticias/2021/04/18/cpi-da-covid-tcu-relatorio-senado-ministerio-da-saude-pandemia-coronavirus.htm>; <https://oglobo.globo.com/sociedade/saude/cenario-de-escassez-de-vacinas-contra-covid-nos-proximos-dois-meses-apontam-secretarios-de-saude-1-24982937>.

10. <https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/materias/2020/10/13/ajuda-do-governo-so-chegou-a-15-das-micros-e-pequenas-empresas>.

11. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2020/03/bolsonaro-diz-que-ainda-nao-considera-decretar-estado-de-sitio.shtml>; <https://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/legislativo/congresso-esta-atento-pra-bolsonaro-nao-decretar-estado-de-sitio-diz-molon/>; <https://www.conjur.com.br/2020-mar-21/estado-sitio-coronavirus-inconstitucional-oab>.

arms. The STF's response was harsh, arresting and proclaiming to arrest and prosecute several of them. But the President has continued with threats, in which he always seeks to involve the Armed Forces, suggesting the closure of the political regime (which, if it depended on him, would function differently, he said) and again trying to haunt the country with a State of Siege, besides other provocations and initiatives, including those of an unconstitutional nature, such as trying to intervene in this CCI.¹²

The President, finally, has been trying to use the Armed Forces as if they were directly at his personal service, which they have been rejecting. This has even led to an unprecedented military crisis, the most serious of the New Republic, during the pandemic, in late March 2021.¹³

Here again the threat to human rights is visible: suggesting the curtailment of the democratic freedoms of Brazilian citizens and the rule of law is a clearly unconstitutional attitude, not to mention the allusion to regime change and the inevitable civil rights violations that this would eventually entail. As if this were not enough, the persecution of public servants and journalists with the use of the notorious National Security Law – which the National Congress wants to review – is a behavior that the Ministry of Justice has been incurring in, compromising human rights and the rights of Brazilian citizens to free speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of expression. For example, in June 2020, the Bolsonaro government forced health workers to sign a secrecy agreement stating that any leak of information discussed in the Ministry of Health could be covered by the National Security Law.

Add to this the attempt to prevent the population from being informed of the true magnitude of the tragedy, when the President and the then Minister of Health, General Eduardo Pazuello, stopped releasing the number of Covid-19 deaths at the end of each day. It is only thanks to the Consortium of press outlets that

since then we have been able to follow the unfolding of this real slaughter.

At the same time, as the Minister of the Environment, Ricardo Salles, stated in a meeting attended by the President, it is a question of, within the limits of the law or outside of it, “passing the cattle” of environmental destruction. In both cases, the typical lack of transparency of authoritarianism manifests itself.¹⁴

If internally the tragedy continues its course, driven by the Federal Government, abroad the mistakes have maintained the pace. The Minister of Foreign Affairs already clashed with China at the beginning of the pandemic, despising the guarantee of inputs for the manufacture of vaccines, the purchase of ready-made vaccines and medicines. Furthermore, contrary to years of successful state diplomacy, Brazil voted in the World Trade Organization (WTO) against emergency patent breaking of coronavirus vaccines. Thus, in the midst of the pandemic, Brazil finds itself increasingly isolated internationally.

The following sections of this text will detail the more specific aspects of the present crisis.

12. <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2020/05/24/bolsonaro-rebate-stf-usa-helicoptero-da-presidencia-para-sobrevoar-ato-de-apoio-e-participa-de-aglomeracao-em-meio-a-pandemia.ghtml>; https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/politica/2020/05/08/interna_politica,852699/bolsonaristas-falam-em-invadir-stf-e-congresso-com-apoio-de-militares.shtml; <https://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/governo/bolsonaristas-ameacam-invadir-stf-e-congresso-com-apoio-de-militares-da-reserva/>; <https://veja.abril.com.br/politica/sara-winter-antes-de-ser-presa-preparava-nova-surpresa-ao-supremo/>; <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/sara-winter-ameaca-ministro-do-stf-apos-ser-alvo-de-operacao-24449015>; <https://g1.globo.com/rj/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2020/06/11/grupo-ataca-manifestacao-que-lembra-mortos-pela-covid-19-no-rio.ghtml>; <https://politica.estadao.com.br/noticias/geral,mandetta-compara-participacao-de-bolsonaro-em-ato-comida-de-populacao-a-praia,70003235715>; <https://www.aosfatos.org/noticias/bolsonaristas-repetem-desinformacao-para-culpar-stf-e-isentar-presidente-por- crise-em-manauas/>; <https://www.poder360.com.br/governo/bolsonaro-diz-que-tem-limites-para-decretar-estado-de-sitio/>; <https://noticias.r7.com/brasil/bolsonaro-volta-a-citar-estado-de-sitio-brasil-deve-voltar-a-trabalhar-31032021>.

13. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2021/03/comandantes-das-forcas-armadas-pedem-demissao-em-protesto-contra-bolsonaro.shtml>; <https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2021-03-30/troca-na-defesa-denuncia- crise-militar-e-marca-divisao-entre-generais-sobre-radicalismo-de-bolsonaro.html>; <https://veja.abril.com.br/politica/os-bastidores-da- crise-de-bolsonaro-com-os-militares/>.

14. [https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-54364652#:~:text=Passando%20a%20boiada%3A%205%20momentos%20nos%20quais%20Ricardo%20Salles%20afrouxou%20regras%20ambientais,-Andr%C3%A9%20Shalders%20%2D%20%40andreshalders&text=%22Precisa%20ter%20um%20esfor%C3%A7o%20nosso,ambiental\)%2C%20e%20simplificando%20normas%22](https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-54364652#:~:text=Passando%20a%20boiada%3A%205%20momentos%20nos%20quais%20Ricardo%20Salles%20afrouxou%20regras%20ambientais,-Andr%C3%A9%20Shalders%20%2D%20%40andreshalders&text=%22Precisa%20ter%20um%20esfor%C3%A7o%20nosso,ambiental)%2C%20e%20simplificando%20normas%22).

II. The role of the STF and the Judiciary¹⁵

From March to June 2020, when President Bolsonaro began his war against the sanitary measures and global health recommendations necessary to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, he also deepened his turbulent relationship with the Judiciary, especially the STF. A routine of threats by the government had already been established due to inquiries involving investigations of allies and relatives of the head of the Executive Branch, which, if not directly related to the coronavirus and Covid-19 crisis, offered the background and precedents for the crisis that unfolded when it reached Brazil. The most striking case had been his interference in order to suspend the authorization of the transfer of financial data from the supervisory body (the Financial Activities Control Council – COAF) to the State Public Prosecutor’s Office (MPE) to investigate the alleged practice of “rachadinha” (embezzlement of parliamentary aide’s salary) by his son, Flávio Bolsonaro, when he was a state Legislative representative in Rio de Janeiro.¹⁶ With the outbreak of the pandemic, the conflicting relationship took on a different meaning. The STF started to guarantee the continuity of health policies based on technical protocols, thus ensuring the application of the constitutional rights to life and health. President Bolsonaro, in turn, reacted with authoritarian statements that questioned the autonomy of the Judiciary, coup pronouncements, as noted above, rhetorical manipulation in order to blame the STF for the current economic crisis, and mobilization of his social base against the Justices of the court, as also already mentioned.

The actions and omissions of the Federal Government during the confrontation of the pandemic were confronted by different judicial instances that sought to prevent the validity of unconstitutional acts with real effects on the preservation of the population’s well-being and information. Such decisions made it impossible for the President to undermine the measures adopted by states and municipalities, such as quarantine, social isolation, and closing of non-essential services, which were recommended by the WHO to control the spread of the virus and the resulting number of deaths.

On March 26, 2020, when the President suggested that “Brazilians don’t catch anything” because they live “jumping in sewers,”¹⁷ he extended by decree the essential activities that governors and mayors could not interrupt due to the crisis, including, among them, religious activities and lottery houses.¹⁸ The next day, the Supreme

Court suspended the validity of this decree and prohibited the Chief Executive from adopting policies contrary to quarantines.¹⁹ During this period, the Bolsonaro government’s Secretariat of Communication started the official anti-confinement campaign “Brazil must not stop” (*O Brasil não pode parar*) with the evident purpose of misinforming the population of the risk of the disease and reaffirming the false health versus economy dilemma.²⁰ When a preliminary video of this campaign began circulating on social networks, Judge Laura Bastos Carvalho, of the Federal Court of Rio de Janeiro, prevented the publication of any material that was not in accordance with the technical health recommendations. This decision was backed by the STF.²¹ Justice Luís Roberto Barroso decided to ban the production and circulation of any campaign advocating that “Brazil cannot stop” because it deviates from statements by the WHO, the Federal Council of Medicine, the Brazilian Society of Infectious Diseases, and the Ministry of Health itself at the time.²² Without technical backing, the government’s advertising was clearly contrary to the right to life and health.

The first judicial shields to the illicit practices of the Federal Government in the context of the pandemic did not stimulate the President to adopt another posture. His constant attempts to intervene in state and municipal measures to protect the welfare of the population revealed contempt for fundamental rights and also disrespect for the constitutional competence of the other federal entities to deal with public health matters. On April 15, 2020, the STF unanimously decided to recognize the autonomy of states and municipalities to promote social isolation in the midst of the Covid-19 crisis. In the decision, the Justices reaffirmed the concurrent competence of mayors and governors with regard to health issues, and thereby ensured their power to regulate the quarantine and decide which essential services cannot stop.²³

Against this decision, the President tried to manipulate it as an excuse for his failure to act on the pandemic and to intensify his authoritarian movement against the STF. He sustained that the court had prohibited him from fighting the disease, delegating decision-making powers to the states and municipalities.²⁴ This was opportunistic behavior that sought to disguise his goal of not confronting the pandemic and, at the same time, to blame the STF for the crisis. In response, the STF Secretary of Social Communication clarified that the decision cited considered that all entities of the federation were responsible for adopting measures to benefit and protect the popu-

15. See overall <http://portal.stf.jus.br/listagem/listarNoticias.asp>.

16. <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/rachadinha-entenda-caso-de-flavio-bolsonaro-apos-decisoes-do-stj-24928221>.

17. <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2020/03/26/brasileiro-pula-em-esgoto-e-nao-acontece-nada-diz-bolsonaro-em-alusao-a-infeccao-pelo-coronavirus.ghtml>.

18. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/eqilibrioesaude/2020/03/em-meio-a-pandemia-bolsonaro-inclui-atividades-religiosas-em-lista-de-servicos-essenciais.shtml>.

19. <https://noticias.uol.com.br/cotidiano/ultimas-noticias/2020/03/27/justica-suspende-decretos-de-bolsonaro-que-liberavamigrejas-e-lotericas.htm>.

20. <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/governo-prepara-campanha-com-slogan-brasil-nao-pode-parar-1-24332284>.

21. <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/justica-federal-do-rio-proibe-governo-de-divulgar-campanha-brasil-nao-pode-parar-24335499>.

22. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/colunas/monicabergamo/2020/03/barroso-veta-publicidade-do-governo-que-diz-que-o-brasil-nao-pode-parar.shtml>.

23. <https://www.conjur.com.br/2020-abr-15/stf-referenda-liminar-competencia-concorrente-mp-926>.

24. <https://www.conjur.com.br/2021-jan-15/bolsonaro-tenta-imputar-stf-omissao-governo-epidemia>.

lation with regard to the pandemic, and therefore the information that the court prevented the Federal Government from acting is false.²⁵

The opportunistic and concealing behavior of the President is revealed by Provisional Measure 966, of May 14, 2020, issued with the intention of restricting the liability of public agents for errors committed during the pandemic to cases of malice or gross error.²⁶ The Federal Government had been the target of lawsuits, representations, and accusations because of its failures in dealing with the Covid-19 crisis. Remember, for example, that in July 2020, seven entities (Centro Santos Dias de Direitos Humanos, Comissão de Justiça e Paz-SP, Idec, Instituto Ethos, Inesc, Oxfam Brasil, and Sociedade Brasileira para o Progresso da Ciência – SBPC) sent a document to the MPF demonstrating that the Union had seriously violated public health norms.²⁷ A little earlier, the Brazilian Bar Association (OAB) had filed an Argument of Violation of a Fundamental Precept against the actions of the head of the Executive Branch that violated WHO protocols.²⁸ In June 2020, President Jair Bolsonaro had even been denounced at the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity.²⁹ Given this adverse scenario, PM 966 evidenced the awareness of the President of the damaging character of the acts and omissions of his government, seeking to shield him from being held accountable for the illicit actions practiced. It is curious to note that this MP was also signed by Minister Paulo Guedes, revealing concerns about his misconduct in the economic field. The STF did not see any formal unconstitutionality in the respective measure, but redefined the meaning of the term “gross error by public agents,” considering it to be administrative acts contrary to the right to life, health, and the environment through non-compliance with legal, technical, and scientific standards.³⁰ On September 10, MP 966 lost its validity.³¹

In truth, whenever the Federal Government has omitted to act or has acted, it has been to increase the risks to life and health. In this sense, the decision of the STF on the concurrent competence of the federal entities to combat the crisis was fundamental to protect the population from the presidential measures that could accelerate even more the rate of contagion and the number of deaths. Still in May 2020, for example, a presidential decree sought to include beauty salons, barbershops, and fitness centers as services that should remain open in the middle of the quaran-

tine. Fourteen states have used the cited decision to prevent this decree from being executed.³²

The STF has been monitoring and demanding that the Federal Government fulfill its constitutional obligation to act in favor of welfare and life. To this end, it has determined that the Ministry of Health take propositional measures and review administrative actions contrary to the fight against the pandemic, and has opened inquiries to investigate deviant practices with negative effects on the number of people contaminated with the coronavirus and killed by Covid-19. Thus, it is important to mention that, in July 2020, Justice Celso de Mello requested information from the Ministry of Health about the recommendation of chloroquine use.³³ In the same vein, in November, the STF plenary considered that changes in the Federal Government’s disclosure of epidemiological data on the pandemic compromised the principle of publicity and transparency, prohibiting changes in methodology that aimed to camouflage numbers.³⁴ In March 2021, the merits of this controversy were judged and the court prescribed that the Ministry of Health disclose the complete Covid-19 data.³⁵

Moreover, in December 2020, after successive omissions by the Federal Government, Justice Ricardo Lewandowski affirmed the need for wide disclosure of the vaccination schedule against the disease.³⁶ Recently, in February 2021, Justice Rosa Weber sustained that the Ministry of Health needed to resume funding beds in Intensive Care Units (ICU) for Covid-19 patients in São Paulo, Maranhão and Bahia, after the interruption of transfers to these states.³⁷ Finally, Justice Lewandowski granted the request of the Attorney General’s Office (PGR) and opened an inquiry to investigate the role of the Minister of Health, General Eduardo Pazuello, in the collapse of public health in Manaus.³⁸ Given this history, the preliminary injunction decision of Justice Barroso, confirmed by the plenary, which established the present CPI of the Pandemic, was a necessary consequence to investigate actions and omissions of the Bolsonaro government that have aggravated the current health crisis, as well as militated against the life and health of the population.

From the Bolsonaro government’s perspective, the clash with the Judiciary has been fuel for mobilizations and authoritarian movements. The President has been instigating his ministers, supporters, and social base to promote manifestations offensive to the democratic rule of law through cursing and attacks on the STF and its Justices. The most notorious was when, at a minis-

25. <https://portal.stf.jus.br/noticias/verNoticiaDetalhe.asp?idConteudo=458810&ori=1>.

26. http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2019-2022/2020/mpv/mpv966.htm.

27. <https://www.conjur.com.br/2020-jul-29/entidades-denunciam-omissao-governo-combate-epidemia>.

28. <https://www.conjur.com.br/2020-mar-31/desestimular-protocolo-covid-ferre-constituicao-oab>.

29. <https://www.conjur.com.br/2020-jun-08/tribunal-penal-internacional-ira-analisar-denuncia-bolsonaro>.

30. <https://www.conjur.com.br/2020-mai-21/agente-publico-comete-erro-grosseiro-descumpre-norma-cientifica>.

31. <https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/materias/2020/09/11/mp-que-impede-responsabilizacao-de-agente-publico-na-pandemia-perde-validade>.

32. <https://www.conjur.com.br/2021-jan-15/bolsonaro-tenta-imputar-stf-omissao-governo-epidemia>.

33. <http://portal.stf.jus.br/noticias/verNoticiaDetalhe.asp?idConteudo=446886&ori=1>.

34. <http://portal.stf.jus.br/noticias/verNoticiaDetalhe.asp?idConteudo=455859&ori=1>.

35. <https://www.migalhas.com.br/quentes/341743/stf-manda-ministerio-da-saude-divulgar-dados-completos-da-covid-19>.

36. <http://www.stf.jus.br/portal/cms/verNoticiaDetalhe.asp?idConteudo=457272>.

37. <https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/justica/noticia/2021-01/stf-abre-inquerito-para-apurar-conduta-de-ministro-da-saude>.

38. <http://portal.stf.jus.br/noticias/verNoticiaDetalhe.asp?idConteudo=459207&ori=1>.

terial meeting, Abraham Weintraub, former Minister of Education, called for the arrest of “bums, starting at the STF.”³⁹ Offenses of this type are spread widely by Bolsonarista social networks. In addition, the President has actively participated in protests calling for a military coup and regime closure.

Within the STF, the Bolsonarista authoritarian reaction has been the subject of three inquiries: on Fake News, on the President's interference with the Federal Police (PF), and on the organization of antidemocratic acts. Regarding the first, there are strong indications, according to press documents, that Carlos Bolsonaro, the President's son, is the articulator of a criminal scheme of creation and dissemination of false news.⁴⁰ The second investigation mentioned was opened after the exoneration of the former director of the Federal Police, Maurício Valeixo, when accusations arose that the head of the Executive branch interfered in the respective body to have privileged access to information and protect his sons from possible investigations (both the Fake News case and the already mentioned involvement of Flavio Bolsonaro in the case of the aforementioned “rachadinhas”).⁴¹ Finally, the investigation of anti-democratic acts, under the responsibility of Justice Alexandre de Moraes, investigates a network that organizes and finances protests calling for the closure of the STF itself, of Congress, and the reissue of AI-5 (the fifth and most authoritarian institutional act of the military regime). The investigations have already affected businessmen, politicians, bloggers and activists linked to President Jair Bolsonaro.⁴²

The relationship between the Judiciary and the President cannot be seen as a mere dynamic of delegation of decision-making powers during the pandemic crisis. Quite the contrary: by interpreting the technical health norms and recommendations of scientific societies to confront the pandemic as a means of guaranteeing fundamental rights, the STF has become an obstacle to the President's radical denialist project and, as such, has become the target of his violent and repressive rhetoric. The development of the inquiries cited, as well as the installation of the present CPI, have been an important instrument to interrupt an authoritarian march that has deepened the Brazilian health, economic, and political crisis.

39. <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2020/05/22/eu-por-mim-botava-esses-vagabundos-todos-na-cadeia-comecando-no-stf-diz-ministro-da-educacao-em-reuniao.ghtml>.

40. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2021/02/veja-o-que-se-sabe-contrainvestigados-no-inquerito-das-fake-news-do-stf-daniel-silveira-e-um-dos-alvos.shtml>.

41. <https://valor.globo.com/politica/noticia/2021/02/24/quais-eram-os-interesses-de-bolsonaro-ao-interferir-na-pf-confira-12-perguntas-e-respostas.ghtml>.

42. <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2020/06/15/entenda-inquerito-do-stf-sobre-manifestacoes-antidemocraticas.ghtml>.

III. The CPI and the Legislative Branch: A Historic Opportunity for Brazilian democracy

Brazilian democracy is currently going through its worst crisis since the advent of the New Republic in the 1980s. A crisis of legitimacy deeply linked to the widespread perception of a lack of accountability and responsiveness of elected representatives to the electorate can be detected. This situation became even more serious under the government of Jair Bolsonaro, and throughout 2020, when the Executive Branch started to publicly challenge the National Congress, including through the call for street demonstrations.

However, since the reestablishment of democracy in the mid-1980s, Congress paradoxically saw its importance grow as a space for debate and formulation of public policy due to its renewed role in the country's Legislative production. During this period, Brazil strengthened its governance structure on issues related to citizenship, environment, human and minority rights, a structure invariably supported by innovative laws, in turn approved on the initiative of representatives sitting in the House of Representatives or the Senate. Bolsonaro's election, however, brought to Brasília and, consequently, to the Federal Legislature, an agenda of setbacks in these areas. It is in this new scenario that Congress has acquired a reinvigorated role, as an important space for political action against a hostile Executive Branch, closed to the demands of civil society.

The National Congress is, by definition, representative and open to the community's influence, being, therefore, a space in which the formulation of policies must assume a public and transparent character, when compared to the Executive Branch. For this reason, the Legislative consists in an important locus for the democratic incidence of society's organizations in order to influence its decisions. Today, however, there are significant obstacles limiting the openness of the Legislative to civil society. Besides this, we have witnessed the de-structuring of the Brazilian political system in recent years, which has increased the lack of knowledge about the modus operandi of the main forces in Congress, thus making it difficult to have an effective advocacy action.

Without a shadow of a doubt, however, the most important obstacle, albeit cyclical in nature, is the health crisis resulting from the spread of the Coronavirus and its related disease, Covid-19. With the initial outbreak in 2020, the interruption of face-to-face activities in the Legislative Branch was imposed, March 13 marking the beginning of social distancing in Brazil. Four days later, however, on March 17, the House and Senate published, respectively, Resolution no. 14/2020 and Bureau Minute no. 07, both instituting the Remote Deliberation System (SDR). The SDR was created to enable the op-

eration of the House during the health and economic crisis related to the coronavirus and Covid-19, allowing the discussion and voting on matters, preferably focused on the public health emergency, subject to the consideration of the plenary in a remote way.⁴³

The experience brings results as relevant as they are obvious. With the President's decision not to form a formal coalition with the major parties represented in the Legislative Branch, it was already expected that the potential for autonomizing the activities of the House and Senate would receive an important boost. With the adoption of the SDR, the health crisis and the denialism adopted by the President and his closest circle, such potentialities were accentuated. The decision-making autonomy, however, is not only the result of the continuous increase of expertise in public policies, expertise accumulated in the thematic commissions and in the advisory offices, but of increased expertise gained during these 30 years of the new Constitution. It is also the result of the presence of lobbying and advocacy organizations within the Legislative's decision-making process. How to maintain such a presence was one of the great challenges posed by the Remote Congress, a challenge that transcended the central strip of the Monumental Axis's (Eixo Monumental – the main governmental road in Brasília) eastern wing by penetrating the very idea of democratic institutionality of the political system as a whole. In this specific sense, the SDR was a good surprise. Decisions central to the minimal maintenance of the population's living conditions came in the wake of the actions of civil society organizations and interest groups with their representatives in our Congress.⁴⁴

The installation of the current Committee on the de facto disastrous management of the health crisis by the Executive Branch represents a recovery of the pride and independence of Congress in decision making. The country sees its economy sink, its population impoverish, and unemployment reach gigantic proportions. It experiences a war situation, counting the deaths and the scenario in hospitals and health clinics. Since the President has already given exhaustive demonstrations of his incapacity and inability to provide minimum conditions to mitigate the situation, it is up to the National Congress to assume its main function as a governing and oversight body in defense of the most sacred interests of Brazilian society. The CPI presents the historic opportunity for the resumption of the autonomy demonstrated throughout the year 2020. After an inauspicious beginning, with the approval of the law authorizing the private acquisition of vaccines, in addition to the pressure for the return of

43. See, overall, <https://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/>.

44. <https://eduerj.com/?product=congresso-remoto-a-experiencia-legislativa-brasileira-em-tempos-de-pandemia>; <https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/infomaterias/2021/03/ha-um-ano-senado-inaugurava-sua-atuacao-remota-contr-a-pandemia-de-covid-19>; <https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/materias/2020/04/01/congresso-nacional-edita-ato-para-normatizar-sessao-deliberativa-remota>; <https://www.camara.leg.br/noticias/650633-ATO-CONJUNTO-REGULAMENTA-A-VOTACAO-REMOTA,-PELO-CONGRESSO-DE-TEMAS-ORCAMENTARIOS>; <https://www2.camara.leg.br/atividade-legislativa/comissoes/comissoes-mistas/cmo/pandemia-de-Covid-19>.

face-to-face activities in Brasília, the House and Senate are giving visible signs of their willingness to fight the good fight – the fight to overcome this tragic scenario that afflicts the country.

The CCI must hold accountable those agents who, due to negligence, assumed ignorance, bad faith, or lukewarmness, failed to follow the obvious collective interest in mitigating the effects of the spread of the health crisis, greatly delaying the necessary steps for the resumption of normal economic and social activities. The opinion polls (such as the ones from Poder-Data 360, among others) have been demonstrating society's growing support for the Legislative as a recognition of the minimum attitudes to face the chaos.⁴⁵ A good investigation, without cowardice or camouflage, will certainly expand and consolidate its position as a safeguard of democracy and of the population's most cherished values, of human and constitutional rights, which are under imminent risk given the inclinations of the President who occupies the Executive Branch.

⁴⁵. For instance <https://www.poder360.com.br/poderdata/44-atribuem-responsabilidade-pela-atual-crise-do-coronavirus-a-bolsonaro/>.

IV. The budget for fighting the health and economic crisis⁴⁶

The focus on the health budget in a pandemic context is totally different from that normally given to the topic. This difference does not arise from the fact that the pandemic demands a rapid and sharp increase in resources for health care, but because the pandemic is a health crisis, which in any country, regardless of its level of development, is fundamentally faced by actions and coordination made by the State.

In this sense, it was known, since the outbreak of the pandemic in February-March 2020, that the SUS, like the other public health care systems, would play a central and dominant role in the fight against the pandemic, simply because the scientific and medical capabilities to face epidemiological events are concentrated predominantly in public institutions.

At the beginning of the pandemic, it was private hospitals that appeared as a reference in the treatment of the first cases of infected people. However, quickly a dominant part of the new cases became the responsibility of public hospitals and those private or philanthropic hospitals associated with the SUS.

It was evident, therefore, that great pressure would be exerted to expand the capacity of the SUS to face the pandemic, whether for cases that would be treated exclusively as infirmary patients or, especially, for the more complex cases that would require ICU care, essential to treat severe cases of Covid-19. For this patient segment, the importance of public hospitals would be even greater, due to the existing technical capacity and the rapid learning that public-sector reference institutions for contagious diseases possess.

The strong pressure on the service capacity of the public sector was soon observed, in Brazil as elsewhere in the world. One month after the outbreak of the pandemic in the country, the need to expand the SUS service capacity became explicit, as well as the adoption of complementary measures to isolate and protect the population from the galloping expansion of contamination by a virus that is little known and without drugs to prevent or combat it efficiently.

The growing signs of a probable collapse of the health care system, even with the important efforts made by most of the governors, showed that it was unavoi-

able to paralyze or sharply reduce economic activities as a way to slow down the speed of the contamination.

The reduction in the level of activity ended up requiring several initiatives from the State, such as support for small and medium-sized companies, income compensation for the poorest population and those inserted in the informal sector, partial financing of salaries in the formal sector, distribution of masks and hygiene material to protect the needy population. Despite the federative organization that governs the national state, only the Federal Government has the ability to expand its spending capacity via the issuing of public debt. In this sense, it was impossible to structure the actions to confront the pandemic without the expansion of the Federal Government's spending, as well as without its coordination of the main initiatives.

Despite this, the President of the Republic not only refused to fulfill his role, but also delegitimized the initiatives taken by other sectors, notably those forwarded by the Ministry of Health itself.

Faced with the worsening health crisis, the almost complete omission of the executive power in taking the measures that were the Federal Government's responsibility, and the pressure from governors and mayors, who became increasingly exposed to a social disaster caused by an uncontrolled pandemic, The National Congress was mobilized with the objective of minimally structuring the necessary initiatives to combat the pandemic and to provide economic and social support, as well as to provide the states and municipalities with the minimum financial resources, either to implement the initiatives or to compensate for the drop in revenue caused by the slowdown of economic activity, or even by the fall in the population's income.

At the height of an unprecedented health, social and economic crisis, parliamentarians should examine how economic policy can overdetermine the causes of morbidity and mortality in a society.

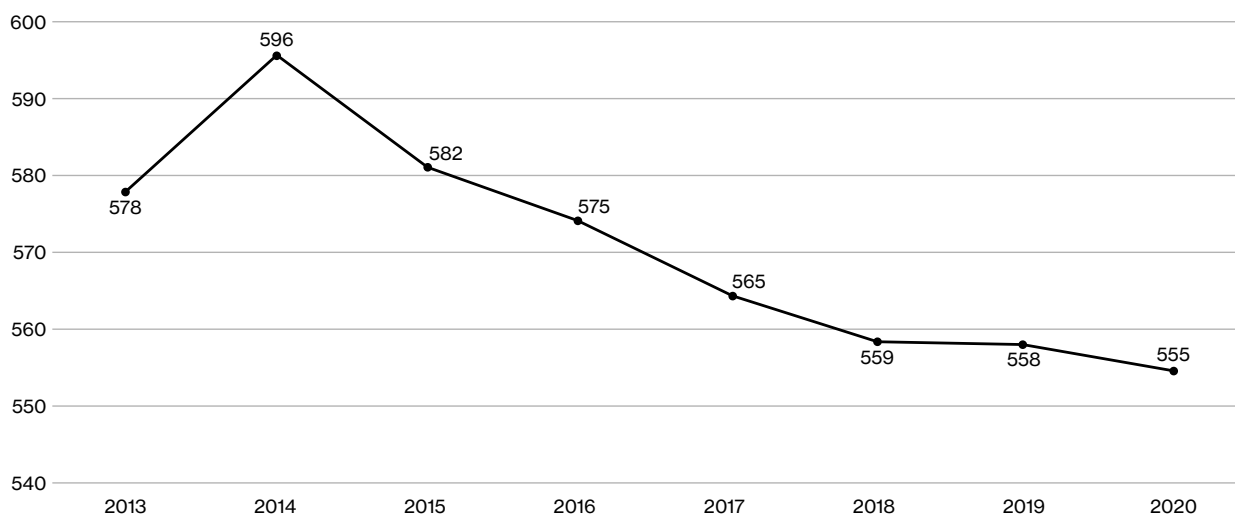
Published in 2013, that is, even well before the pandemic, David Stuckler and Sanjay Basu made an important contribution for us to reflect on the current Brazilian situation. In the book entitled *The Body Economic: Why Austerity Kills*, the authors criticized the effects of fiscal austerity policies on the living conditions and health of the populations. In the context of increasing poverty, inequality, and unemployment, the Federal Government should have repealed Constitutional Amendment 95/2016, either the spending cap or the rule established for the federal health care floor per capita – which has been falling systematically since 2015 (Chart 1) – to face economic stagnation, the new coronavirus, and the chronic “underfunding” of the SUS. The weight of health per capita retreated from R\$596.00 to R\$555.00 from 2014 to 2020.

46. <https://www.camara.leg.br/noticias/648307-lideres-da-oposicao-propoem-renda-basica-emergencial-durante-a-pandemia/>; <https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/politica/noticia/2020-05/congresso-promulga-emenda-do-orcamento-de-guerra>; <https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/materias/2020/10/23/executivo-gastou-77-7-do-orcamento-previsto-para-combate-a-pandemia>; <https://g1.globo.com/economia/noticia/2020/04/03/medidas-economicas-na-crise-do-coronavirus-veja-perguntas-e-respostas.ghtml>.

GRAPH 1
Health floor per capita
2013-2020
(in 2019 R\$)

Produced by Ocké-Reis, Benevides, Funcia e Melo, 2021
 (in press).

Source: Siga Brasil (Senate ASPs available at <https://www.senado.leg.br/orcamento/sigabrasil>, access on 09/15/2012 and 02/10/2020 Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics IBGE for the population estimated on the reference date July 1st, available at <http://bit.ly/3270AKx>, access on 09/16/2019.



Instead, to face the pandemic last year, the government ended up approving the decree of public calamity and the Constitutional Amendment No. 106/2020 (establishing the War Budget), flexibilizing the fiscal regime, thus financing health spending through debt and the use of resources disconnected from the single account of the National Treasury.

However, instead of applying again this year the decree of public calamity and the War Budget – which allowed for the flexibilization of the fiscal rules in 2020 –, the government not only obeyed, but doubled down on the ultraliberal credo, hardening the fiscal austerity policy with disastrous consequences for the living conditions and health of Brazilians.

Following this logic, the Constitutional Amendment 109/2021, recently approved by the National Congress, created, for the Union, a subceiling within the spending

cap. In addition, it penalized states and municipalities, providing for the activation of triggers that reduction of the salaries of public servants and mandatory expenses necessary to combat the pandemic. Finally, EC 109 detached the financial surplus from social funds, channeling it to amortize the debt.

It is worth noting, according to a document prepared by the National Health Council last year,⁴⁷ that the Ministry of Health, through action 21C0, authorized the execution of R\$ 63.7 billion to fight the Covid-19 with the transfer of R\$ 9.7 billion to the states and R\$ 23 billion to the municipalities (Table 1).

47. Boletim da Comissão de Orçamento e Financiamento do Conselho Nacional de Saúde (Cofin/CNS), 31/12/2020. Brasília: CNS, 2020. Available at: <http://conselho.saude.gov.br/boletim-cofin>.

TABLE 1

Source: Boletim da Comissão de Orçamento e Financiamento do Conselho Nacional de Saúde (Cofin/CNS), 31/12/2020. Brasília: CNS, 2020. Available at: <http://conselho.saude.gov.br/boletim-cofin>.

Expenditure Calendar	Total	Direct Application	31 Transf. to States Fund to fund	41 Transf. to Municipalities Fund to fund	80 Overseas Transfers	91 Direct Intra-Budgetary Application	40 Transfers to Municipalities	50 Transfers to Private Non-Profit Institutions	99 To Be Defined	Total as % of Allocation	Share
UPDATED ALLOCATION	63.743	28.705	9.883	23.310	1.618	104	3	119	1		100%
COMMITTED	41.757	6.783	9.859	23.275	1.618	104	0	119	0	65,5%	65,5 of updated all
To be committed	21.985	21.923	24	35			3		1		34,5 updated all
% To be committed	34,5%	76,4%	0,2%	0,1%			100,0%		100,0%		
PAID OFF	40.327	5.763	9.716	23.092	1.591	104	0	61	0	63,3%	99,6 of committ. all
To be paid off	1.431	1.020	143	183	27	0		57			3,4 of committ. all
% To be paid off	3,4%	15,0%	1,5%	0,8%	1,7%	0,2%		48,2%			
DISBURSED	39.404	5.575	8.985	23.088	1.591	104	0	61	0	61,8%	97,7 of paid off all
Paid off to be disbursed	923	188	730	5		0					2,3 of paid off all
% Paid off to be disbursed	2,3%	3,3%	7,5%	0,0%		0,0%					
COMMITTED TO BE DISBURSED	2.354	1.208	874	188	27	0		57		3,7%	5,6 of committ. all
% Committed to be disbursed	5,6%	17,8%	8,9%	0,8%	1,7%	0,3%		48,2%			

This picture only reinforces the observation that, contrary to the recommendations of the WHO, the President, when denying the pandemic, promoted a false dichotomy between health and the economy, operating a genocidal state policy in Brazil. The Ministry of Health not only omitted itself in relation to the reduction of the health budget, fundamentally of SUS, but also contributed to its materialization. In a debate held last December, health specialists denounced that the Ministry of Health had not demanded resources for the purchase of vaccines in 2021.⁴⁸

Today, with difficult perspectives to guarantee the vaccination and mass immunization of the population, the Federal Government is the main actor responsible for the tragedy we are witnessing, with more than 400.000 deaths, not to mention the hospital and health system collapse with the lack of ICU beds, oxygen, equipment, and medicines in SUS and the private health sector.

For a year now, Covid-19 has claimed thousands of lives, and at an increasing rate. The Federal Government has repeatedly shown itself incapable – or uninterested, once again the omission characterizing its action – of executing the extraordinary credits approved for the fight against the pandemic in 2020, be it regarding the purchase of immunizers and medicines,

or the financing of ICU beds, which were falling, while the number of deaths in Brazilian society skyrocketed.

Despite the deficit of ICU beds in the public sector, the Federal Government reduced funding for ICU beds as the second wave of the pandemic demanded, on the contrary, expansion. According to the National Council of Health Secretaries (CONASS), between July 2020, the first peak of the pandemic, and March 2021, Federal Government funding of ICU beds fell from 11,565 to 3,372, essentially due to lack of financial planning.⁴⁹

As the document from the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA) on responses to Covid-19 notes,⁵⁰ in addition to “no intention to elaborate a general plan for the SUS, built collectively” to face the pandemic, the delay in making resources available was a trademark of the Ministry of Health’s actions, compromising adequate emergency care for the population and fueling the escalation of new cases and deaths.

Chart 2 indicates how slow the release of expenditures was throughout 2020, only following the approval of funds at the end of the War Budget period. Between May and August 2020, at the time of the first peak of the pandemic, resources that could save lives were dammed up.

48. <http://conselho.saude.gov.br/ultimas-noticias-cns/1531-brasil-nao-tera-orcamento-para-vacina-de-covid-19-em-2021-concluem-especialistas-em-debate-na-camara-dos-deputados>.

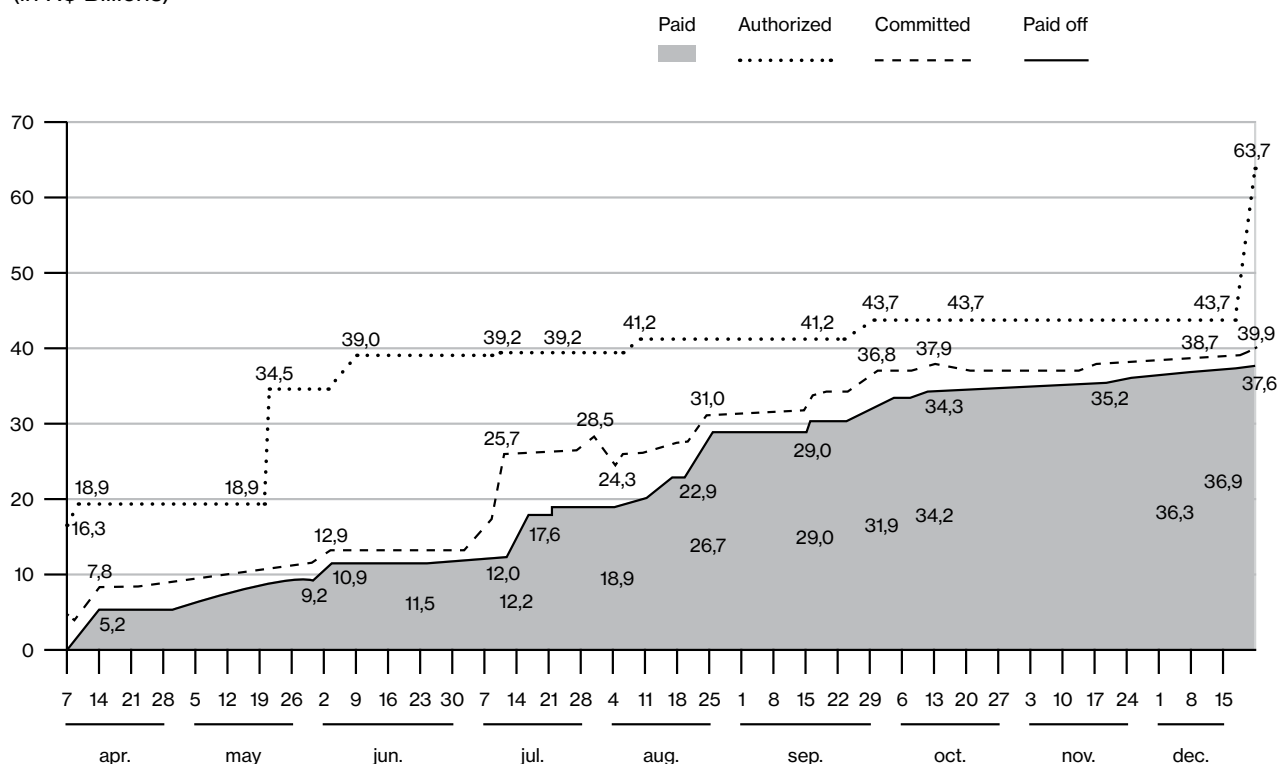
49. <https://g1.globo.com/bemestar/noticia/2021/03/09/numero-de-leitos-de-uti-covid-financiados-pelo-ministerio-da-saude-cai-mais-de-70-percent-entre-picos-da-pandemia.ghtml>.

50. https://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/images/stories/PDFs/politicas_sociais/210331_boletim_bps_28_saude.pdf.

GRAPH 2

Ministry of Healty Budget for action
21CO-Brazil (April 7th- Dec 20th, 2020)
(in R\$ Billions)

Source: Boletim da Comissão de Orçamento e Financiamento do Conselho Nacional de Saúde (Cofin/CNS), 31/12/2020. Brasília: CNS, 2020. Available at: <http://conselho.saude.gov.br/boletim-cofin>.



The most disconcerting thing is to see that the budget allocated for the purchase of vaccines in the War Budget, around R\$24.51 billion, had a little more than 10% of its value executed. Only R\$2.9 billion were committed in 2020, incontrovertible proof that the Federal Government neglected the purchase of immunizers, although these were a priority in the fight against the coronavirus and Covid-19.

In more than two years in office, the Minister of Economy, Paulo Guedes, does not seem to have learned how to produce a budget. He announced, in early April 2021, the umpteenth “strong and solid” social program,⁵¹ which has great chances of adding to the list of initiatives that sank before they even took shape (the cases of *Renda Brasil* and *Renda Cidadã*). Adrift, it boasted misleading financing mechanisms, which ranged from the use of “precatórios” (delayed state payments) to the detour of FUNDEB funds or

even the extinction of contributory and non-contributory benefits, that is, suppressing constitutional rights, which adds to the list of disrespect for fundamental rights listed above.

Not even the budget destined to the payment of the Emergency Aid in 2020 was spent in its entirety. The monitoring panel for expenses with Covid-19 (National Treasury Secretariat 2020) points out that R\$ 604 billion were foreseen,⁵² of which only R\$ 524 billion were spent (Chart 3). Of this total, R\$ 322 billion were authorized for Emergency Aid; however, as also confirmed by INESC, an estimated R\$ 28.9 billion were not paid out.⁵³ A surplus that probably explains why one million poor adults were not reached last year by the Emergency Aid, as revealed by the PNAD Covid-19 cross-references.

51. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/2021/04/bolsonaro-e-ovacionado-em-jantar-com-empresarios.shtml>.

52. <https://www.tesourotransparente.gov.br/visualizacao/painel-de-monitoramentos-dos-gastos-com-covid-19>.

53. <https://oglobo.globo.com/economia/governo-nao-gastou-29-bi-autorizados-para-auxilio-emergencial-em-2020-aponta-estudo-1-24958550>.

TABLE 2Expenditure Monitor
of the Union with Covid-19Source: Tesouro Nacional Transparente <https://www.tesourotransparente.gov.br/visualizacao/painel-de-monitoramentos-dos-gastos-com-covid-19>Paid Predicted
524.0 Bi 604.7 Bi

0.0 Bi

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SPENT WITH COVID-19 (R\$ BILLIONS)	Predict	Paid	Know more
Emergency Support and People in vulnerable situation	322,00	293,11	MPs nº 937, 956, 970 e 988/2020
Expansion of the Program Bolsa Familia	0,37	0,37	MP nº 929/2020
Emergency benefit for the maintenance of employment and income	51,55	33,50	MP nº 935/2020
Financial Support to States, Municipalities and Capital	79,19	78,25	MPs nº 939, 978 e 990/2020
Granting of financing for payment of salaries	6,81	6,81	MP nº 943/2020 e Lei nº 14.043/2020
Transfer to the account for energy development	0,90	0,90	MP nº 950/2020
Accounts of Funds guarantying credit operations	58,09	58,09	MPs nº 977, 972, 997 e 1.020/2020
Financing tourist infrastructure	5,00	3,08	MP nº 963/2020
Emergency Program of access to credit "Maquininhas"	10,00	5,00	MP nº 1.002/2020
Additional spending of the Ministry of Health and other Ministries	46,33	42,70	–
Acquisition of vaccines	24,51	2,22	MPs nº 994, 1.004 e 1.015/2020
TOTAL	604,75	524,02	

This inoperativeness aggravates hunger and humiliates those who, although they meet the criteria of being beneficiaries of the Emergency Aid, have been discarded, made invisible by the State, which has the constitutional obligation of protecting them. The State preferred to withhold resources that should have been distributed to the most vulnerable population, impoverished and unable to work, thus failing in its constitutional duties. The unspent amount of R\$ 28.9 billion corresponds to 65% of the R\$ 44 billion that will finance in 2021 the second round of Emergency Aid that began to be paid in early April, this time for only 4 months.⁵⁴

54. <https://www.infomoney.com.br/minhas-financas/sistema-do-auxilio-emergencial-2021-atrasa-e-governo-muda-data-em-que-o-trabalhador-podera-saber-se-tem-direito-ao-beneficio/>. An adult single will receive R\$ 150,00, families R\$ 250,00, and head of family single women R\$ 375,00. Targeted are only those who received Emergency Aid in 2021, workers who had an established entitlement to the aid in December 2020. This surely excludes a large contingent of some million people that would qualify to receive it.

The amount is far below the coverage of basic survival needs. Survival is now answered by philanthropy and diffuse social solidarity.

We must also remember that the Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights, headed by Minister Damaraes Alves, only spent 44% of its budget in 2020 out of a total of R\$ 853 million.⁵⁵ Extremely vulnerable communities, such as the remaining *quilombolas*, which should benefit from an already modest portion of the Ministry's budget – R\$ 110,000 – received nothing. The budget for actions to confront violence against women, a situation that grew significantly during the pandemic, was only 6% of what was planned (R\$ 24.6 million), which aggravated the vulnerable situation of women victims of domestic violence, who could not be assisted. The high increase

55. <https://oglobo.globo.com/sociedade/damaraes-gastou- apenas-44-da-verba-do-ministerio-dos-direitos-humanos-em-2020-1-24770270>.

in the number of maternal deaths caused by Covid-19 should also be highlighted. The Feminist Network of Gynecologists and Obstetricians points out that eight out of every 10 maternal deaths reported in the world have occurred in Brazil. The causes are directly related to the disorganization in prenatal care and the lack of therapeutic inputs and beds.⁵⁶

Not even the emergency benefit to maintain employment and income, which had credits of R\$ 51.55 billion, was executed to satisfaction. Only R\$ 33.50 billion were spent, which undoubtedly contributed to worsen the situation of penury, poverty and food insecurity that plagues millions of unemployed workers without the right to financial compensation.

Added to the losses caused by EC-95, regarding the amount of R\$ 22.5 billion before the pandemic, the SUS will lose R\$ 41,1 billion in 2021 in relation to the values executed in action 21CO (facing Covid-19) in 2020.⁵⁷ This shows the fairness of the National Health Council's proposal, made last year, to guarantee an emergency health floor of R\$ 168.7 billion.⁵⁸

Even more worrying, however, is the fact that the amount of R\$ 44 billion, which will be destined to Emergency Aid, represents approximately 1/6 of what was spent in 2020 (R\$ 293 billion). After all, this mechanism, along with others in the War Budget, among them those aimed at maintaining income and employment, is the main instrument to guarantee health measures such as lockdown and interruption of non-essential activities in general, amid the increase in hunger, unemployment and social violence in Brazilian society.

We should this year apply at least the R\$ 524 billion seen in 2020, which ended up preventing the 4.1% drop in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from being greater, with evident positive effects on tax collection and the debt/GDP ratio. Within certain limits, the scandalous narrative around the bankruptcy of the Brazilian State is illusory. In truth, there is no lack of money, but there is an excess of spending rules, which self-impose limits on the performance of the State.

In the opposite direction of the world, which has been applying expansionist fiscal policies – the United States, for example, has approved yet another fiscal package, this time to the tune of US\$ 2 trillion –, the aim is to impose further cuts in spending that has a strong multiplying and redistributive effect. Making a fiscal adjustment on the expenditure side will deepen the deficit, further undermining the State's ability to expand public investment and social spending.

In its saga of annihilating the Brazilian State, by revealing ineptitude, unpreparedness, and contempt for public action, as well as radical disrespect for the human and constitutional rights of Brazilian citizens, the Bolsonaro government reinforces the prejudice against all that is public and leaves implicit the direction to be taken: to open the nation's management to the private sector. It is this motto that leads inexorably to the approval of bills authorizing the purchase of vaccines by private enterprise amidst bottlenecks in the national immunization plan managed by the government itself. The private business sector is grateful even if it has not yet achieved what is in its line of priorities, the freedom to commercialize vaccines. For the time being, they will offer their employees the same illusion of protection invoked by the warlords in defense of the serfs. The right to protection in exchange for the obligation to work, and work well.

The strategy adopted by the Federal Government reproduces in an amplified way the health, social and economic crises in the present, but also in relation to the future. The fiscal and conjunctural view adopted by the government on the budget disregards the enormous challenges that it and future governments will face after overcoming the critical phase of the pandemic. The SUS will be required to pay attention to the sequels of the part of the population contaminated by the coronavirus and the consequences of Covid-19, as well as to solve the backlog of exams and surgeries that should have occurred during the pandemic. The educational system will have to take initiatives aimed at overcoming the various learning, sociability, and psychological deficiencies consolidated during the health crisis. Measures aimed at generating employment and income will be demanded. Initiatives to fight poverty and hunger will be on the agenda of an expansion of the basic income program, whatever its format.

In short, as observed in other countries and even in some Brazilian states, governments seek to strategically organize the public budget to face immediate challenges, while taking initiatives oriented to the post-pandemic world, either because of the unfavorable legacy that the pandemic will leave, or to protect against a new situation similar to the one experienced in the present. This strategic vision is completely absent from the concerns of the Federal Government. On the contrary, the botched manner in which it is currently conducting the federal budget signals that even greater budgetary bottlenecks will be reserved for the coming years and, therefore, for the governments that will succeed the current disastrous management.

56. <http://estudamelania.blogspot.com/2021/04/rede-feminista-de-ginecologistas-e.html>.

57. An ongoing study developed by Ocké-Reis points to a budget lack of up to R\$ 5 billion vis-à-vis the expenses with vaccines in 2021. In fact, the TCU has criticized what it defined as the inexistence of a budget to tackle the pandemic in 2021: <https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/ultimas-noticias/2021/04/20/cpi-da-covid-tcu-coronavirus-covid-19-governo-bolsonaro.htm>.

58. The federal floor for health is R\$ 131,2 billion in 2021. Adding this amount to those R\$ 41,1 billion, we have arrived to R\$ 172,3 billion (considering the vaccine balance of R\$ 21,6 billion allocated this year as an extra feature).

V. The Ministry of Health in the pandemic⁵⁹

The pandemic of coronavirus and Covid-19, with its tragic health, political, and economic consequences, granted Brazil a singular place among the countries with late and insufficient responses to prevent cases and deaths. The delay and disproportion between the amount of resources for tracking and treating patients in face of the magnitude of transmission has been a problem in itself. The “lack” of beds, equipment, tests, oxygen, and vaccine shortages have been countered with chloroquine and later “early treatment” drug packages, and other chimeras. In April 2021, more than a year after the Federal Government declared a state of public health emergency in Brazil on February 4, 2020, the SUS, health professionals, and the population directly affected by Covid-19 continue to be exposed to severe shortages of hospital beds, lack of doctors, and medicines.

On the occasion of the official registration of the first positive case in the country, on February 26th, the then Minister of Health, Luiz Henrique Mandetta, said that new resources would be invested to expand beds, purchase personal protective equipment for health professionals, and in laboratories for testing. The alleged investment, like other official announcements that followed, had little practical repercussion. In May, the extreme shortage of tests and hospital beds was still explicit, besides the collapse of intensive care units in capitals like Fortaleza, even in the private sector, the lack of oxygen in Manaus, and other such debacles.⁶⁰

The optimistic and reassuring tone of government authorities about the “country’s preparedness” and the “SUS capacity” to face the pandemic was gradually replaced by unkept promises, omissions, evasions, and the recognition of the unavailability of strategic inputs. Between February and May 2020, although less euphoric, official speeches insisted, at the height of the first phase of the pandemic, on announcing the expansion of the hospital network and the acquisition of inputs that should have been provided long before the first phase of the Covid-19 explosion in the country.

Currently, in the middle of the worsening lack of vacancies for hospitalization of patients in the SUS, broadcasted daily by the media, we still hear that many beds will be available through renovations and readjustments in the public network or negotiations for the

purchase of vacancies in the private sector. One of the main parameters for the exit of social isolation, the hospital occupation indicator, has become unfeasible in a scenario where not even the promised and necessary beds were offered.

The belated attempt to respond, given the huge underreporting of cases, which can be partly attributed to the lack of large-scale testing, was unsuccessful. The then Minister of Health, Nelson Teich, promised that the government would buy 46 million tests, when even the announcement by Mandetta, the previous minister, to distribute 23.9 million tests, had not materialized. Tests remained unused for months, about to expire, without the Ministry using them. The TCU even had to, again, recently intervene in the matter.⁶¹

Similarly, the official announcement that the Ministry of Health would register five million health professionals to reinforce the fight against the new coronavirus was unsuccessful. A growing crisis of shortage of doctors, intensive care specialists, and frontline care staff has occurred, in inadequate and unsafe working conditions, with overcrowding of patients, overload of working hours, emotional stress, infection, and deaths of health care workers. Without a coordinated management of human resources, we see the difficulty of temporary and improvised hiring, delegated to private social organizations, fragmented in edicts and unattractive calls.⁶²

As we can see from the data presented in the previous section of this document, promises of financial resources in the double-digit billion, tests in the double-digit million, respirators and beds in the double and triple-digit thousand, respectively, did not materialize, neither in the announced purchases, nor in the expected deadlines, nor in the delivery dates, invariably late, if and when they occurred. Expressions such as “collapse of the health system” and “ICU scores,” to evaluate who lives and who dies, came to be naturalized at one point. The biological phenomenon of the coronavirus and the objective difficulties that surround it, such as the inexistence of effective therapies and, until recently, of a vaccine, are definitely not of the same nature as the disorganization of a health system and the political mismanagement that had a decisive impact on the increase in the number of deaths and are responsible for the terrible indicators of pandemic control and delay in immunization efforts.

Even the initiatives to expand resources for assistance for the SUS, including for specific vulnerable groups, such as indigenous people,⁶³ took a long time

59. See, overall, <http://cebes.org.br/>.

60. <https://www.istoedinheiro.com.br/ainda-bem-que-temos-o-sus/>; <https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/saude/noticia/2020-03/mandetta-diz-que-nao-faltarao-recursos-para-o-combate-ao-coronavirus>; <http://cebes.org.br/2020/11/recursos-para-o-enfrentamento-da-covid-19-orcamento-leitos-respiradores-testes-e-equipamentos-de-protecao-individual/>; <https://diariodonordeste.verdesmares.com.br/metro/hospitais-privados-de-fortaleza-estao-em-colaso-afirma-secretario-da-saude-1.3060925>; <https://www.poder360.com.br/coronavirus/a-sucessao-erros-manaus-dw/>.

61. <http://conselho.saude.gov.br/ultimas-noticias-cns/1631-cns-alerta-para-kits-de-exames-covid-19-que-estao-prestes-a-vencer-novamente-prejuizo-pode-chegar-a-r-206-4-milhoes>; <https://g1.globo.com/economia/noticia/2021/04/12/tcu-determina-que-ministerio-da-saude-utilize-testes-de-covid-com-vencimento-proximo.ghtml>.

62. <https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/brasil/2020/06/03/interna-brasil.860515/dramatica-falta-de-medicos.shtml>; <https://g1.globo.com/economia/noticia/2021/04/12/tcu-determina-que-ministerio-da-saude-utilize-testes-de-covid-com-vencimento-proximo.ghtml>.

63. <https://amazoniareal.com.br/como-a-pandemia-avancou-sobre-os-indigenas-da-amazonia/>; <https://www.conjur.com.br/2021-mar-16/barroso-homologa-parcialmente-plano-conter-covid-indigenas>.

to be put into effect and are smaller in scale than the magnitude of the health crisis demands; they were in part driven by the STF, which annulled the vetoes of the Federal Government. This trajectory marked by the non-activation of population protection strategies, mitigation of assistance measures for symptomatic and sick people, and stimulation of quack alternatives, which became official, affected the SUS, especially in its capacity to respond to the pandemic.

Even amidst the uncertainties about the disease, throughout 2020 and continuing into 2021, several countries solved the equations for controlling the spread and reducing lethality within the health system, institutions, and services. In March 2021, in Brazil, on the contrary, twice as many deaths were registered as in July 2020, when Brazil stood out negatively on the international scene, by becoming the main country responsible for the increase in deaths in the world, besides being a fertile laboratory for the emergence of new variants (more contagious as the strain originated in Manaus and possibly more lethal).⁶⁴

The disqualification of prevention measures, the delay in purchasing vaccines and the boycott of social containment initiatives by governors and mayors, and the permanent tension between health and the alleged recovery of the economy, have established a pendulum in the public agenda. At one moment the focus was on the health crisis, at another, on Emergency Aid, as if they were opposite poles. The holder of the economic portfolio, Paulo Guedes, even considered restricting access to the Farmácia Popular program (the Popular Drugstore program – whose resources were reduced anyway) to make it possible to finance the Renda Brasil, an absurdity that fortunately did not succeed.⁶⁵

The SUS, once examined under a magnifying glass, once again occupied a small space on the public agenda. However, the window opened for the SUS to let us glimpse into the immense adherence to the perspective of organizing a comprehensive and qualified public network. Although the duration of the valorization of health as a discussion topic has been diminished in the country, the meaning of a protective SUS has been affirmed. There remained a feeling, albeit diffuse, of gratitude to health professionals and agreement with the universal right to health, in contrast to the President and his government.⁶⁶ However, unlike the past marked by more or less intense doses of optimism in relation to disease control, the present is marked by uncertainties about Covid-19 transmission and illness.

Due to the short duration of the temporal interval of priority for health, the consensual statement: "... and if it wasn't for SUS, what would have happened in Brazil?!", has not been succeeded by significant expansion and investments in the public network. Pub-

lic authorities' comments about the SUS have been parsimonious. The Minister of Economy, stated "with three billion, four billion or five billion we can annihilate the coronavirus," which has evidently not been the case.⁶⁷ The former President of the House of Representatives, Rodrigo Maia, pondered: "I had a very pro-private health market vision, but we see that SUS is important."⁶⁸ High and persistent rates of transmission and deaths from Covid-19, evidenced the relevance of the SUS, but did not necessarily deflect previous trends. The population in this sense remained exposed and vulnerable to the disease, relying in part on their own strategies and resilience to survive. There were additional resources for the SUS, but they were provided late and in underdoses. In Brazil, contrary to the movement made by several countries to expand the public installed capacity and increase the remuneration of health professionals, investments were irregular and partly allocated to the organization of transitional services.⁶⁹ The scope and quality from traditional epidemiological surveillance actions to access qualified intensive care units have been compromised, and gaps in prevention and in outpatient and inpatient care remain unresolved.

The expansion of the presence of military personnel, in the direction of important health agencies, which began in 2019 in the direction of Anvisa and Empresa Brasileira de Serviços Hospitalares (EBSERH) (the Brazilian regulatory agencies in the health care area), as well as in the short term of physician Nelson Teich at the Ministry of Health, was not casual. Between May 2020 and March 2021 with the presence of General Eduardo Pazuello, an active-duty army officer, for a key post in confronting the pandemic, the use of chloroquine was made official as a treatment strategy.⁷⁰ In July 2020, the then president of the National Council of State Health Secretaries, a defender of the need for social isolation and opponent of the Federal Government, stepped down from his position due to accusations of improper use of public resources.⁷¹ At the crossroads between the economic, political and health crises, the Ministry of Health was left with an absence from the political scene – and above all, a deliberate and strategic silence. It spent much less than what was allocated even in the budget to combat the coronavirus and Covid-19, although it was by no means the only portfolio of the Federal Government to have this lamentable performance, evidenc-

64. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/03/world/americas/brazil-covid-variant.html>; <https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus/country/brazil>.

65. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/equilibrioesaude/2021/04/na-pandemia-governo-reduz-farmacia-popular-que-trata-comorbidades-da-covid.shtml>; <https://www.conass.org.br/23434-2/>.

66. <https://piaui.folha.uol.com.br/confianca-no-sus-tem-crescimento-recorde-na-pandemia/>.

67. <https://economia.uol.com.br/noticias/redacao/2020/03/13/com-r-5-bilhoes-a-gente-aniquila-o-coronavirus-diz-paulo-guedes.htm>.

68. <https://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/saude/maia-diz-que-mudou-visao-sobre-o-sus-eu-tinha-uma-visao-muito-pro-mercado/>.

69. <https://economia.uol.com.br/noticias/reuters/2020/05/04/em-manaus-teich-diz-que-recursos-sao-escassos-e-nao-se-deve-pensar-agora-em-hospital-de-campanha.htm>; <https://exame.com/brasil/escassez-no-sus-profissionais-da-saude-relatam-batalha-contra-coronavirus/>.

70. <https://www.em.com.br/app/noticia/nacional/2021/01/18/interna-nacional,1230181/nota-do-ministerio-da-saude-desmente-pazuello-sobre-uso-de-cloroquina.shtml>.

71. <https://www.conass.org.br/nota-oficial-renuncia-do-presidente-alberto-beltrame/>; <https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2021-02-05/ministerio-da-saude-reduz-pela-metade-os-leitos-de-uti-para-covid-19-custeados-pela-pasta-em-fevereiro.html>.

ing once again how an inaction, an omission, actually corresponds to an action.⁷²

There was a political realignment around the Minister-General and a distancing of the health area in the national debate. The acquiescence of some governors and mayors to the suppression of the barriers of population protection measures, in fact omission in relation to the provisions to generate objective support to social distancing and distribution of kits containing Covid-19 drugs, already mentioned above, without proof of efficacy, in fact proven internationally that they are at best useless,⁷³ aggravated the structural situation of inequalities in risk exposure and access to health care.

It was in this context of depreciation of knowledge and practices of public health and SUS that the production and acquisition of vaccines was neglected and the country lost the chances of articulation between Butantan, Fiocruz and international manufacturers for the development of vaccines, did not carry out the purchasing agreements that were established with other countries and decided to participate in the Covax Facility consortium, centered in the WHO, with the minimum number of doses, as already observed in a previous section of this document.

Finally, with Table 2 below, we detail elements presented above when relating the forecasted and executed expenditures of the Ministry of Health, in which then it is clearly observed the not full use of the available budget throughout the year 2020. The difference between the forecast and the concrete allocation of expenses is concentrated in the direct applications item, exactly the one that if executed would allow a coordinated action of the federal entity, showing that R\$21.5 billion were not mobilized, which could have filled gaps in prevention and care related to the pandemic of covid-19. In other words, almost 40% of the available financial resources were not mobilized by the Ministry of Health. The misuse of financial resources in the context of the health tragedy expresses objectively the omission and incapacity of the team that, since May, has taken over the Ministry of Health.

72. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/2021/02/r-80-bi-de-verba-da-covid-em-2020-ficam-parados-e-parte-segue-represada.shtml>; <https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2021-04-07/governo-deixou-de-gastar-807-bilhoes-de-reais-destinados-a-pandemia-em-2020-diz-estudo.html>.

73. <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-52799120>.

TABLE 3
Expenditure of the Union to face
Covid-19 Ministry of Health, Brazil 2020

Produced by the Research and Documentation Group
on Health Entrepreneurship (GPDES) IESC/UFRJ

Source Ministry of the Economy Treasury Transparent. Expenditure Monitor
of the Union in the combat to Covid-19

KIND OF EXPENSE	SPENT	EXPECTED EXPENSES
Contracts for determined period	14.019.924	259.112.746
Owners Obligations – internal budget operations	3.775.154	61.000.000
Transfers to States and Capital Contributions – each Fund	8.364.943.974	9.229.770.230
Transfers to Municipalities Contributions – each Fund	22.403.704.290	22.576.582.579
Other Services to other legal entities	21.075.967	34.418.182
Social Grants	49.489.841	104.214.746
Consumables	1.940.781.101	2.372.313.579
Contributions	1.154.180.683	1.161.425.608
Direct Investments	–	21.595.319.146
Contracts for determined period	1.006.840	18.147.908
Civil Personnel – daily expenses	1.954.029	1.954.029
Military Personnel – daily expenses	17.242	18.203
Financial Support to students	447.014.175	517.684.795
Financial Support to researches	104.625	2.050.146
Tickets and Expenses with transportation	3.817.092	5.031.593
Other spending with personnel	88.563.719	168.956.739
Consultancy Services	30.940	1.487.470
Other services	34.527	34.527
Labour lease	34.712.649	49.718.150
Other services – legal entities	2.190.420.103	2.651.054.955
IT and communication services	381.000	604.589
Taxes	21.889	21.889
Other forms of support to people	403.097.889	415.120.941
Expenses from previous periods	2.968.794	2.968.794
Indemnities and refunds	241.571	241.571
Taxes and contributions from budget	103.540.558	103.540.558
Transfers to states	627.299.776	649.697.664
Transfers to municipalities	734.370.434	751.810.786
Other Services to legal entities	1.272.169	1.385.465
Construction and Installations	87.454.204	107.994.114
Equipment and permanent material	808.551.170	1.104.262.755
TOTAL	39.488.846.329	63.947.944.457

Unfortunately, contrary to what happened in previous epidemics, Brazil was not able to bring together scientific and health care efforts and the production of supplies in a coordinated manner. The provision of strategic resources for patient care, besides being late and insufficient, has established a confusing flow of negotiations between the Federal Government, governors, mayors, health secretaries, and the Legislative branch (National Congress, States Houses, and City Councils), for the release of funding for the organization of the care network.

So far, the objective experience of the pandemic has not been enough to destabilize the discourse and the practices of naturalization of risks and deaths. The President continues to show contempt for the minimum rules of coexistence and democracy. We need to stop the cancellation of the perspectives of a more solidary and healthy future. The right to health is today globally considered a fundamental right, a universal human right par excellence. It is also a right guaranteed by the 1988 Constitution. Although its enforcement had already seriously lapsed before the current pandemic, it is being radically disrespected at the present moment.

VI. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the isolation of Brazil in the pandemic

International isolation and the attack on institutions are the elements that have the clearest consequences for the management of the pandemic crisis as far as Brazil and the government's actions are concerned. The foreign policy of the Bolsonaro government has been characterized by an attack on the institutions of global governance and the United Nations (UN) System in particular, in addition to an automatic alignment with the foreign policy of the Donald Trump administration in the United States, and a focus on defending a foreign policy aimed at preserving a specific, impoverished, reactionary version of what they understand as "Western civilization." Brazil's isolation in the international system is unique in relation to the history and patterns of our foreign policy. The emphasis on the discontinuity of the "new" foreign policy with respect to our tradition since the Baron of Rio Branco had the consequence of limiting our access to power resources accumulated since the process of re-democratization. Here we must first emphasize the need to understand the complexity of international relations, which increasingly involve public and global health issues, and the activation of networks of interaction, knowledge, and negotiation. Thus, the international isolation to which the Bolsonaro government subjected the country had direct consequences when the pandemic required the activation of these same networks, which had been sabotaged by the government itself.

One should focus in particular on the negative stance toward China in general, and in the context of the pandemic in particular. China is a central provider of the resources needed to confront the Covid-19, it is our main market for exports, and rapprochement relationships have been built since the 1990s that could have been activated. In March 2020, in the first days of the pandemic, Congressman Eduardo Bolsonaro (PSL-SP), the President's son, used his social networks to blame China for the global health crisis. The post earned replies in a tone of indignation and repudiation from the Chinese ambassador to Brazil, Yang Wanming, and from the Chinese embassy's own profile. The term "Chinese virus" was used in a way incompatible with international diplomacy at different times. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ernesto Araújo, blocked his possibilities of dialogue with the Chinese government.⁷⁴

Furthermore, during the electoral process in the United States in 2019, the position of the Brazilian

government was of clear support for the re-election of then President Trump, and was one of the last in the world to recognize the victory of the Democratic Party candidate, John Biden, only doing so a month after the elections. Bolsonaro also endorsed Trump's narrative that the election was marred by fraud, a charge that found no legal backing.⁷⁵ The international press, different social movements, non-governmental organizations, and various governments have incorporated an extremely negative image of the Brazilian government and its foreign policy in particular. Civil society organizations like Human Rights Watch have accused the Bolsonaro government of sabotaging prevention measures in the face of the pandemic, and have demanded a proactive position that respects the human and constitutional rights of Brazilians.⁷⁶

Thus, with the advent of the pandemic, the search for communication, support, and negotiation for access to the vaccine and other resources has been hampered. However, it is worth pointing out the silence and default of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which has not exercised its constitutional role of building bridges with potential partners in the country and with other ministries for the development of public policies.

Global politics has been marked by the pandemic in several ways, with exacerbation of nationalism and emphasis on health aid. Vaccine diplomacy has become a common practice in the context of the current pandemic. China, Russia, India, among other countries, have used the donation of vaccines as a way to increase their international and regional influence. In this context, Brazil's international isolation has also resulted in not being able to access these vaccines with fluidity.

Minister Ernesto Araújo, on the contrary, actively participated in the collective effort to promote conspiracy theories aiming at the permanent mobilization of the Bolsonaro base, to the detriment of his constitutional function of building bridges with the international universe. Ernesto ignored the international negotiations to make vaccines viable. He called the new coronavirus the "communavirus" and affirmed that it was a globalist trap to establish worldwide socialism.⁷⁷ The minister also pointed to what he called "covidism" as an enemy to be fought and associated the epidemic to a conspiracy against freedom, a theme to which he returned insistently.⁷⁸ True to the deep association he established between the new Brazilian foreign policy and a conservative domestic project, he defended the policy of the Bolsonaro government, including in relation to "early treatment" and against social isolation, even associating the motto "stay at home" with favoring drug trafficking.⁷⁹

74. <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-51963251>; <https://veja.abril.com.br/mundo/china-acusa-eduardo-bolsonaro-de-ameacar-suas-relacoes-com-brasil/>.

75. <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/bolsonaro-insiste-em-fraude-nos-eua-diz-que-sem-voto-impresso-em-2022-vamos-ter-problema-pior-24827509>; <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mundo/2020/12/bolsonaro-reconhece-vitoria-de-biden-mais-de-um-mes-apos-eleicao-nos-eua.shtml>.

76. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/brazil>.

77. <http://funag.gov.br/biblioteca/download/politica-externa-soberania-democracia-e-liberdade.pdf>.

78. <http://funag.gov.br/index.php/pt-br/2015-02-12-19-38-42/3376>.

79. <http://funag.gov.br/index.php/pt-br/2015-02-12-19-38-42/3330>; <https://www.metapoliticabrasil.com/post/por-um-reset-conservador-liberal>.

Three aspects of global health governance have a direct impact on pandemic coping strategies: providing information based on scientific studies, coordinating public policies and accessing vaccines. Regarding these three aspects, the Bolsonaro government did not cooperate and did not make appropriate use of the available resources. The government did not incorporate or disseminate WHO information, did not work with countries in the region to control the flow of the disease and did not obtain the possible advantages in the case of the Covax Facility program, coordinated by WHO.

The “anti-globalist” perspective, a term used systematically by the Bolsonaro government, manifests itself in an attack on international institutions, seen as a threat to Brazilian sovereignty and endowed with a social inclusion agenda that threatens traditional institutions.⁸⁰ Minister Araújo maintained a critical position towards the WHO throughout the crisis, stressing the primacy of national solutions. In June 2020, the President of the republic went further and even mentioned the possibility of the country leaving the organization after the pandemic.⁸¹

The manifestations about Brazil by WHO officials make explicit the contradictions between the entity’s policy and the policy of the Brazilian government. On November 30, 2020, the Director General of this UN System organization warned about the rapid spread of the coronavirus and Covid-19 in Brazil and Mexico, asking the authorities of both countries to take it “very seriously.” In early March 2021, the country was declared the epicenter of Covid-19 in the world, when it surpassed the United States in the number of deaths per day. The perception that public policy on the issue is misguided and a threat to established human and constitutional rights is widespread internationally. Anna Cavazzini, Green Party MEP and Vice-President of the European Parliament’s delegation for Brazil, said that “[what is] happening in Brazil is a tragedy. But it could have been avoided” if it had not been “based on wrong political decisions.”⁸²

The management of the coronavirus pandemic has also come under scrutiny by the Organization of American States’ (OEA) Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). Resolution nº 1/2020 approved by the Commission makes 85 recommendations to the governments of the States to implement measures to combat Covid-19, which the Brazilian government has lamentably shied away from fulfilling.⁸³

The pattern of foreign policy of associating the debate on intellectual property and human rights and public health, as well as the association between the elaboration of public policy by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of International Relations, patterns of behavior of previous governments, were aban-

doned by this government. Thus, when the initiative to suspend patents was presented in October 2020 by India and South Africa, the choice made by the Brazilian government was a huge surprise. The aim of the text was to temporarily suspend four sections of the TRIPs agreement (Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights), which regulates intellectual property rights under the WTO, on copyrights, patents, industrial design and the protection of confidential information. This compulsory licensing consists of temporarily suspending the exclusive rights of the owner of a patent. The initiative is supported by WHO Director Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. The proposal currently has the support of about 80 states, but is blocked by the United States, the European Union, and other rich countries. Brazil remains the only country opposed to the idea among middle- and low-income nations. On April 14, 2021, the Brazilian government again defended the preservation of vaccine patents during the pandemic. This position also had an impact on relations between Brazil and India, where there was an expectation of Brazilian support for the proposal brought to the WTO.

The Brazilian government informed on September 18, 2020 of its intention to join the Covax Facility, the global program for the development and access to vaccines against Covid-19. The announcement of the decision was made at 9:30 pm (Brasília time), just before the deadline set by the WHO, which was midnight. On September 29, the Federal Government announced an investment of R\$2.5 billion for the country’s entry into the Covax Facility, through Provisional Measure No. 1.004, of September 24, 2020. It is noteworthy that, besides having joined the program at the end of the deadline established by the mechanism, Brazil opted, as already noted in this document, for minimum coverage when joining it. Having the option to request enough doses to vaccinate between 10 and 50% of the population, the choice was for 10%. Our country entered as one of the financiers, with the minimum quota: it bought 42 million doses, enough for only 21 million Brazilians.⁸⁴

The allocation of Special Drawing Rights from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the Covid-19 crisis is now under discussion, and has received wide international support. U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen has supported the measure. The expansion of special drawing rights for the benefit of middle-income countries in this action is also supported by the UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC). The Brazilian government has been absent from this debate, again avoiding to collaborate so that we have access to crucial resources during and after the present crisis.⁸⁵

80. <http://funag.gov.br/index.php/pt-br/2015-02-12-19-38-42/3330>.

81. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-brazil-bolsonaro-who-idUSKBN23G27R>.

82. <https://noticias.uol.com.br/colunas/jamil-chade/2021/04/15/no-parlamento-europeu-bolsonaro-e-acusado-de-crimes-contra-humanidade.htm?cmpid=copiaecola>.

83. <http://funag.gov.br/index.php/pt-br/2015-02-12-19-38-42/3376>.

84. <https://saude.abril.com.br/medicina/o-que-e-a-iniciativa-covax-contra-a-covid-19-e-como-ela-funciona/>. See other documents quoted above too.

85. <https://epocanegocios.globo.com/Economia/noticia/2021/04/epoca-negocios-yellen-diz-que-mais-trabalho-e-necessario-para-tratar-fraquezas-expostas-pela-pandemia.html>; <https://www.cepal.org/pt-br/articulos/2021-alocacao-direitos-especiais-saque-des-o-desenvolvimento-beneficiaria-todos-os-paises>.

In other words, also in the field of foreign policy and international relations, Brazil adopts a negationist and minimalist stance, contrary to the human and constitutional rights of the Brazilian people. Here too, the need to reverse this course and create the conditions for the Brazilian population to have their rights respected and for our country to start collaborating with the fight against the coronavirus pandemic and the spread of Covid-19, ceasing to be a problem and a global threat, is evident. The Senate CPI also from this angle should consider the imperative of administrative and political accountability of the Federal Government, which, in our opinion, should culminate with the impeachment of the President of the republic, primarily responsible, although not the only one, for the actions, omissions, and misgovernment, which led to such a tragedy befall the Brazilian people.