



WHAT IS THE MOST

What is Brazil's largest social movement, the Landless Rural Workers' Movement?





The MST is the largest social organization in Brazil.

More than one million people are in MST and live in encampments and settlements on recovered land where they work, farm, study, and build communities.

Photo by
Diângela Menegazzi and Valter Leite

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During the height of the COVID-19 crisis, when the Brazilian government under Bolsonaro failed to support the people, the MST stepped in and donated around **10,000 tons of healthy and pesticide-free food** to those in need.



Image by Nicolas Gandhi

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The MST has been under attack by agribusiness
- backed conservatives in parliament and by
mainstream media.

On April 26, the right-wing dominated Chamber
of Deputies approved the creation of a **Parliamentary
Commission of Inquiry (CPI)** to investigate
“the activities,” “the real purpose,” and
“the means of funding” of the MST.



Photo by Paulo Pinto

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Many of these attacks are focused
on the land occupations carried out
by the MST.

Right-wing politicians and mass media
incorrectly say these are **“invasions”**
and that the movement should face
criminal consequences.





WHAT IS A LAND OCCUPATION?

Since its founding in 1984, the landless families organized in the MST have occupied unproductive lands as a way to fight **for land redistribution, for the right to housing and work, and to combat inequality in the countryside.**

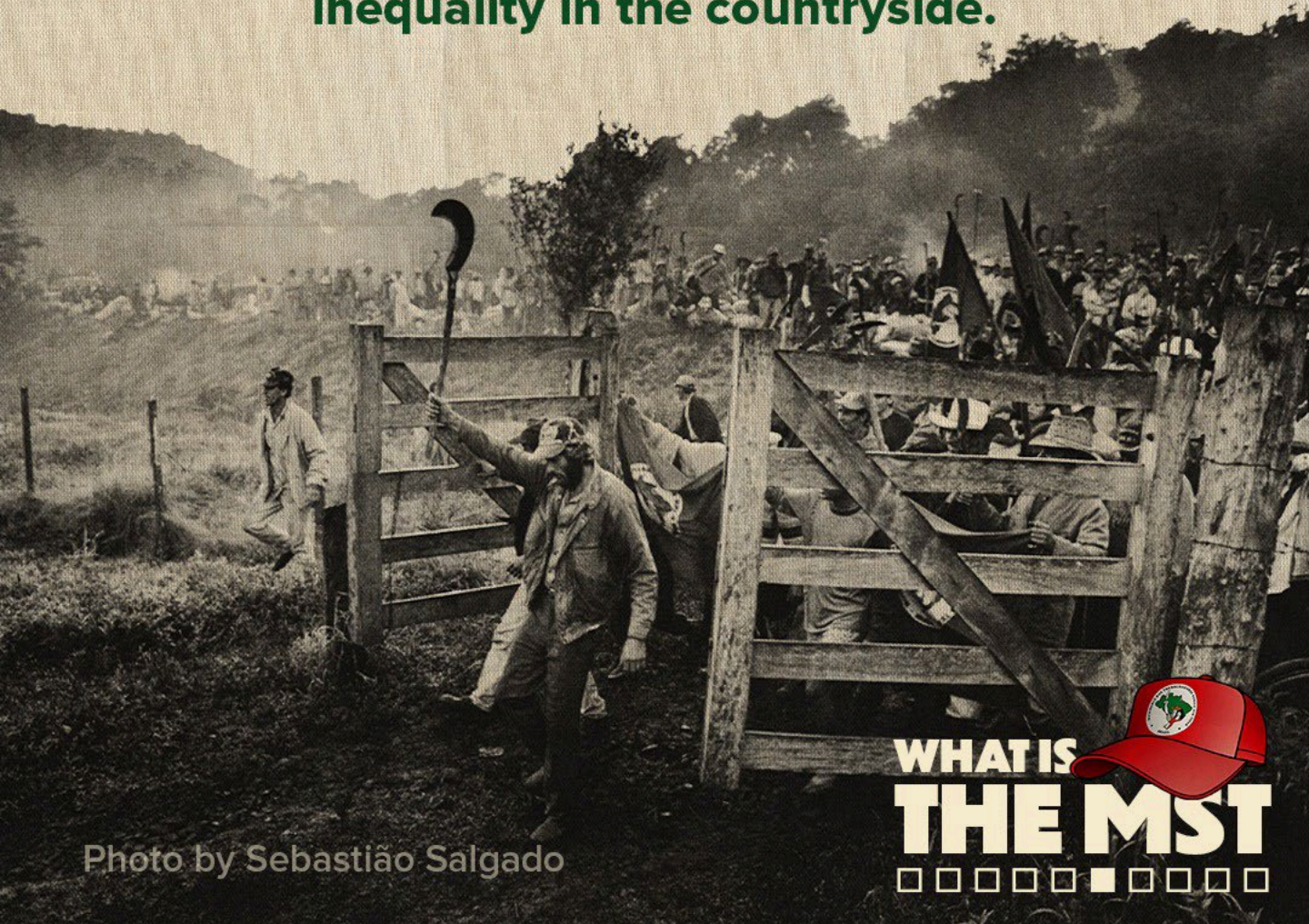


Photo by Sebastião Salgado

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MST'S LAND OCCUPATIONS HAVE CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS

The Brazilian Federal Constitution of 1988 says the Union should *“expropriate for social interest, for agrarian reform, rural property that is not fulfilling its social function.”*

The MST occupies unproductive lands, lands involved in tax fraud, and areas where environmental violations and labor violations have taken place including slavery, child labor, and human trafficking.



Photo by Valmir Fernandes



WHY IS THE MST A THREAT?

- In Brazil, around 1% of landowners control almost **50% of land**.
- The MST fights for land, but also democracy, social justice, and fundamental rights for all Brazilians.
- The movement is also **the largest producer of organic rice** in Latin America and the Caribbean.



Photo by Renan Mattos

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In May, the MST organized the **National Agrarian Reform Fair** in São Paulo as a celebration of culture, diversity, healthy food, and the struggle of landless workers.

- **1,700 agroecological producers** from 191 cooperatives and family agriculture associations across Brazil participated.
- **38 tons of food** were donated to 24 different organizations in the city to help families in need.
- **412 artists** participated.
- **320,000 people** visited the fair.

Photo from Twitter

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The MST's struggle for radical change in society has made it the enemy of large landowners and the far-right, but has made it many more friends.

A social media campaign **#TôComoMST (#ImWithTheMST)** was launched and people from across the world have expressed their support for the movement and its role in fighting for a better world.

Photo by Renan Mattos


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