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**Lula's Absence Is Evident at TV Debate among Presidential Candidate**

09/08/2018



The absence of the absolute leader in all surveys on vote intention, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, will undoubtedly be evident today at the first TV debate among presidential candidates in Brazil.

Although the Workers' Party (PT) appealed on Wednesday to the Regional Federal Court of the Fourth Region (TRF-4), which sentenced Lula to 12 years and one month in prison, so that he could participate in the debate, the Court had not issued a ruling at midnight on Thursday.

Last Monday, Judge Bianca Arenhart claimed procedural issues to reject a request in that regard and directed the recourse to TRF4 President Carlos Eduardo Thompson Flores, who interfered to annul a judicial order to guarantee the immediate release of the former president in July.

Yesterday's appeal against judge's decision underlines that the 'unjust, illegal and unconstitutional provisional execution of the sentence' on former President Lula by that court cannot deprive him of his political rights or his freedom of expression and communication.

It also demanded that the former president's participation in the debate be guaranteed, either in person or on a video conference or on videos previously recorded at the Superintendence of the Federal Police of Curitiba, where he has been a political prisoner since April 7.