

**United Nations Human Rights Council
40th Regular Session**

General Debate - Item 3

Statement by Conectas Direitos Humanos

Delivered by Mr. Gustavo Huppes
08 March 2019

Mr. President,

Civil society space in Brazil is under threat. On January 1st, President Bolsonaro enacted Executive Order number 870 that reformulated the structure of the federal executive branch.

President Bolsonaro, in an unprecedented move, gave the power to one of the Presidency Office's Secretariat to "oversight, coordinate, monitor and follow the activities and actions of international organizations and non-governmental organizations in the national territory".

The Secretariat of Government traditionally had the role of interaction and dialogue between civil society and the federal administration. The role to monitor the activities and actions of NGOs is a new, abusive and unconstitutional measure.

The Brazilian Constitution is explicit in preventing State interference in the functioning of civil society organisations and guaranteeing full freedom of association.

During the electoral campaign Bolsonaro promised to "put an end to all forms of activism" in Brazil. We call on this Council to follow closely this first measure to put into practice the closing of civic space in our country.

A free, active and vibrant civil society is part of a solid democracy. We call the National Congress to amend the text now under its review to eliminate the abusive and unconstitutional control element of NGOs from Executive Order 870.

Thank you.