

International Day of Action to Defend the Brazilian Amazon: How to Plan a Protest!

Following are some ideas for your consideration as you plan a peaceful action in solidarity with Brazilian social movements. Each location is different, so some of these suggestions might not be appropriate to your locale. However, we hope you find this a useful tool as you prepare!

Essential Considerations and Logistical Questions:

Who: Who is the target audience that will result in your protest having the greatest impact (embassy, government, company, etc.) and who should be protesting with you (students, workers, NGO's, etc.)?

Not only do you want a lot of people present, but you want people who will be energized and enthusiastic about your message.

When: Time and date- think of greatest availability of potential protesters (weekend, afternoons, or lunch breaks). If targeting embassies and consulates, make sure embassy representatives will be there when you arrive at the embassy.

Where: Your local Brazilian embassy, consulate and gathering point. It is always a good idea to scout the area and familiarize oneself with the site, if marching, plan a complete route ahead of time and remember it-Doing this will make your event run much smoother.

What (How): Rally, Protest, March, picket line, civil disobedience, theatrical performance, collection of signatures, etc....

Why: Must have a relevant, comprehensive and focused topic for protest. Limit to one solid theme or idea and make sure that it comes across easily during protest. You want passers-by and random activists that are involved to clearly know your message. Messaging should be kept simple, direct and clear.

People:

Organizers and participants

- Students
- Activists
- Allies from national organizations
- Allies from International organizations
- General public

How to mobilize people?

- Facebook/twitter/other social media sites (create events and send reminder messages as the protest nears and updates).
- Network and connect people living in close proximity to each other.
- Publicize in universities-students a good resource (through flyers, tabling, or school media- radio, TV, newspapers)
- Distribute invitations and information through mailing lists.
- Local newspapers, radio
- Leave flyers and advertise in restaurants or other venues with a lot of activist attention

- Ask groups to cosponsor, provide money or materials, mobilize their offices, publicize, and provide speakers! Depending on where you live, you should have organizations able to help you with this.

Speakers/Spokespeople

- Choose one to three people that have some involvement and expertise in the situation/topic/cause (especially if what you are protesting is happening in another country, it is important to have a native of that country support your efforts publicly)
- Follow-ups
- Confirm logistics

Publicity (prior to protest and at the event):

Prior

- News coverage (send notices ahead of time discussing the cause and plans for the protest along with expected turn out)
- What media are you trying to target? National Media, local media, international media
- Media advisory (a couple of days before the event)
- Press Release (longer version of the media advisory that includes text a journalist could use to write their story)
- Update your social media sites to advertise and outline the principal details of the protest.

At the event

- Appoint photographers and videographers to document protest.
- Any media (local, national, or international- must be contacted in advance with details of logistics and message behind protest, follow-ups necessary to confirm attendance and coverage at the event)
- Conduct interviews with media and interview protesters or speakers

Media follow up:

- Write blogs about your event
- If you recorded any, upload your YouTube videos of the protest.
- Follow up the protest's media coverage (articles, radio/TV coverage, etc.) and share it with people.
- Update all participants on results of the protest (those that joined the FB event or that you emailed)

Preparation for event:

- Create a database of contacts necessary for the protest (media, attendees, sponsors, NGO allies, etc.)-Google docs is good for doing this.
- Scout route if marching, and any locations- meeting location and/or protest location
- Create flyers, pamphlets, and any other advertisement materials well in advance
- Permit: Permits needed for route if street should be closed down or sidewalk will be blocked. Also needed for protest location if group will block public paths; contact any services that could be involved: police, secret police, park police, etc.
- Staff: Any additional staff needed? Marshalls, security, consultants, etc. Work with them to make the protest run smoothly.

- Do the same with any musicians (drummer, flutist, etc.), dancers or performers
- Plan for any other materials: megaphones, batteries, special clothing, etc.
- Visuals/Artwork: prepare banner, signs or visuals for protesters to hold. You may prepare a visual performance or something memorable for your protest (i.e. flood simulation, dressing like Avatar characters, etc.. .) something that is relevant to the cause- might need external support or consulting,
- Prepare a petition or letter to deliver to embassy, government, etc.

At the event:

- Hand out half-sheets with information the protest messaging on one side and chants on the other.
- Briefly introduce the topic to the protesters, run through chants and rehearse any visual presentations multiple times (both before without protesters and then again when protesters arrive), assign roles of protesters, run through outline of protest (with times and activities, i.e. march starts at 12:30, protest begins at 1pm)
- Distribute signs and visuals; a good idea is to use double sided signs, with your country's official language on one side and Portuguese on the other.
- **March:** have at least one individual on the bullhorn shouting out the chants (should be 5-8 chants), have "Marshalls" leading the procession in the front, as well as behind the group to prevent stragglers, send one or two people ahead of the group (about half an hour in advance) to be at the protest location in case any other protesters or media arrive earlier than expected
- **Protest:** give people time to gather and meet with any police present, continue with chants, visual performance and then allow speakers to present. If any petition or letter has been created, finalize the protests by delivering to recipient.
- Speakers- present on topic to motivate protesters and provide more information on the topic, also should conduct interviews with any media present!
- **At the end:** Thank protesters, let people know that they will be updated on any progress and let them know what they can to help in the future (donate, sign petition, stay informed, etc.)!!!

Organizational Partners

- These are organizations that might be able to provide you with additional help such as:
 - Outreach to their lists, spreading the word
 - Funding for materials and/or consultants
 - Providing people to help on the day of the protest (potentially as important actors, such as photographers, videographers, etc)
- Potential Partners:
 - Environmental activists
 - Human rights campaigners
 - Concerned Brazilians