# Lula condemns 7.1% fall in aid as military spending surges among rich nations



Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has issued a strong condemnation of the recent decline in financial assistance from wealthier nations to developing countries. Speaking at the Blue Economy and Finance Forum in Monaco, he highlighted a concerning 7.1% drop in Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2024, juxtaposed with a notable 9.4% increase in military spending among these countries. This first decrease in ODA after five years of growth has raised alarm over its implications for poverty alleviation and global development.

Lula underscored the shifting priorities of wealthier nations, asserting that the issue is not a shortage of funds but a lack of political will to invest in crucial developmental initiatives. He stated, “What is lacking is the willingness and political commitment to finance it.” This sentiment mirrors broader concerns expressed by Achim Steiner, the outgoing head of the United Nations Development Programme, who warned that reductions in foreign aid are inflicting irreparable damage on global development systems. Steiner pointed to significant funding cuts by major donors, including the United States and several European nations, which have directly impacted essential services such as food assistance and healthcare.

The recent OECD report elucidated the factors contributing to this decline in ODA, which amounted to a total of USD 212.1 billion in 2024, representing only 0.33% of the combined Gross National Income of DAC members. The reductions were attributed to decreased contributions to international organisations, diminishing aid to Ukraine, and a general slump in humanitarian assistance. Notably, ten major European donor countries are set to further reduce their ODA by $18 billion in 2025 compared to the previous year, indicating a troubling trajectory for future aid.

At the forum, Lula also drew attention to the critical role that oceans play in global economics, asserting that if the ocean were a country, it would rank fifth in the world in terms of economy. He pointed out the underfunding of Sustainable Development Goal 14, which focuses on conserving and sustainably using marine resources, estimating an annual shortfall of $150 billion needed for its full implementation. With over 80% of international trade and 97% of global data networks reliant on marine ecosystems, Lula argued that neglecting these resources jeopardises not only environmental health but also the economic stability of many developing nations.

In addressing the broader implications of financial underfunding for the blue economy, Lula highlighted that developing countries are more reliant on marine resources than their industrialised counterparts. Rising sea levels and extreme weather events consistently impact vulnerable coastal communities, making sustainable economic practices even more crucial. “Of the 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, 23 have more maritime territory than land,” he pointed out, framing the sustainable management of marine resources as vital for this region’s prosperity.

The Brazilian president also proposed more effective engagement from international financial institutions and easier access to climate funds as essential for the realisation of developmental goals. He mentioned Brazil's own initiatives, such as the Bolsa Verde programme, which supports families engaged in marine conservation, and substantial investment directed towards enhancing marine productivity and sustainability.

As Lula prepares for Brazil's presidency of COP30 in Belém later this year, he emphasises the urgent need for collective action. “The planet can't take any more broken promises. There is no isolated solution to the challenges that require collective action,” he affirmed. His remarks resonate with a growing international consensus on the necessity for robust commitment to aid and development, particularly in light of the deteriorating conditions faced by the most vulnerable nations.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://en.mercopress.com/2025/06/09/lula-condemns-drop-in-financial-assistance-to-developing-countries-amid-surgind-military-spending), [[3]](https://www.oecd.org/en/about/news/press-releases/2025/04/official-development-assistance-2024-figures.html), [[4]](https://focus2030.org/Historic-drop-in-Official-Development-Assistance-in-2024)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.ft.com/content/fc2981d1-4298-42e2-8f35-4e4b7da04fcd), [[5]](https://www.devex.com/news/in-2024-global-aid-fell-for-the-first-time-in-five-years-109874)
* Paragraph 3 – [[6]](https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/194357/international-aid-falls-in-2024), [[7]](https://hellenicaid.mfa.gr/en/preliminary-official-development-assistance-oda-levels-in-2024/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://en.mercopress.com/2025/06/09/lula-condemns-drop-in-financial-assistance-to-developing-countries-amid-surgind-military-spending), [[2]](https://www.ft.com/content/fc2981d1-4298-42e2-8f35-4e4b7da04fcd)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://en.mercopress.com/2025/06/09/lula-condemns-drop-in-financial-assistance-to-developing-countries-amid-surgind-military-spending), [[5]](https://www.devex.com/news/in-2024-global-aid-fell-for-the-first-time-in-five-years-109874)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://en.mercopress.com/2025/06/09/lula-condemns-drop-in-financial-assistance-to-developing-countries-amid-surgind-military-spending> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/fc2981d1-4298-42e2-8f35-4e4b7da04fcd> - Achim Steiner, the outgoing head of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), warned that cuts in foreign aid by wealthy nations are causing irreversible damage to global development systems. He highlighted significant funding reductions by major donors, including the U.S., the UK, and other developed countries like the Netherlands, Australia, and Switzerland. These actions have led to life-threatening consequences, such as reduced food rations in refugee camps and disruptions in HIV/AIDS treatment. Steiner stressed that the damage from these cuts could be permanent, warning that the infrastructure and partnerships lost cannot be easily or quickly restored.
3. <https://www.oecd.org/en/about/news/press-releases/2025/04/official-development-assistance-2024-figures.html> - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reported a 7.1% decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2024, marking the first drop after five consecutive years of growth. The decrease was attributed to reduced contributions to international organisations, decreased aid for Ukraine, lower levels of humanitarian aid, and reduced spending on hosting refugees in donor countries. The total ODA amounted to USD 212.1 billion, representing 0.33% of DAC members’ combined Gross National Income (GNI).
4. <https://focus2030.org/Historic-drop-in-Official-Development-Assistance-in-2024> - Focus 2030 highlighted a historic 7.1% decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2024, the first drop after five years of consecutive growth. The decline was primarily due to reductions in support for international organisations, aid to Ukraine, humanitarian assistance, and in-donor refugee costs. The article also noted that ten major European donor countries are planning to reduce their ODA by $18 billion in 2025 compared to 2023, indicating a continued trend of decreasing aid.
5. <https://www.devex.com/news/in-2024-global-aid-fell-for-the-first-time-in-five-years-109874> - Devex reported a 7.1% decline in global Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2024, marking the first decrease in five years. The downturn was attributed to a recalibration of donor priorities, driven by a sharp decline in funds earmarked for Ukraine, a significant drop in refugee-related costs within donor countries, and reduced humanitarian spending overall. The total ODA amounted to USD 212.1 billion, representing 0.33% of DAC members’ combined Gross National Income (GNI).
6. <https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/194357/international-aid-falls-in-2024> - DevelopmentAid reported a 7.1% decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2024, marking the first drop after five consecutive years of growth. The decrease was attributed to reduced contributions to international organisations, decreased aid for Ukraine, lower levels of humanitarian aid, and reduced spending on hosting refugees in donor countries. The total ODA amounted to USD 212.1 billion, representing 0.33% of DAC members’ combined Gross National Income (GNI).
7. <https://hellenicaid.mfa.gr/en/preliminary-official-development-assistance-oda-levels-in-2024/> - The Hellenic Aid Ministry reported a 7.1% decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2024, marking the first drop after five consecutive years of growth. The decrease was attributed to reduced contributions to international organisations, decreased aid for Ukraine, lower levels of humanitarian aid, and reduced spending on hosting refugees in donor countries. The total ODA amounted to USD 212.1 billion, representing 0.33% of DAC members’ combined Gross National Income (GNI).