

Washington praises police massacre in Rio in Trump's new political intervention in Brazil

Tomas Castanheira**7 November 2025**

On Wednesday, the US government sent a letter to Rio de Janeiro's Security Secretariat congratulating it on the barbaric police massacre of 117 civilians committed a week ago.

"It is with deep regret that we express our most sincere condolences for the tragic loss of the four police officers who fell in the line of duty during the recent Operation Containment in Complexo do Alemão," states the letter signed by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) of Donald Trump's administration.

These words echo the criminal statement of Rio de Janeiro's fascistic governor, Cláudio Castro (Liberal Party – PL) one day after the deadliest police operation in Brazilian history: "Yesterday, the only victims were the police officers."

The imperialists in Washington concluded their tribute to the "tireless work of the state's security forces" by affirming their "willingness to provide any support that may be necessary."

The letter, which provocatively clashed with the position of the federal government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Workers Party - PT), represents a new US imperialist intervention in Brazil's internal affairs.

Trump's support of the barbaric crimes committed by the Castro government was an open challenge to the position adopted by President Lula, who the day before had publicly criticized and questioned the legality of the murderous police operation.

In his first public criticism of the Rio de Janeiro massacre, Lula declared Tuesday that "the judge's decision [authorizing the operation] was for an arrest warrant. There was no mass killing order, yet there was mass killing."

"People may consider it a success, but from the standpoint of state action, I think it was disastrous," Lula concluded.

More than a diplomatic provocation, the letter issued Wednesday is one of several indications of Washington's direct participation in the preparation of the massacre in Rio de Janeiro and in using it to further an ongoing fascist conspiracy in Brazil.

On Monday, the PT leader in the Chamber of Deputies, Lindbergh Farias, filed a request for an inquiry against Governor Cláudio Castro for leaking confidential Brazilian reports to the United States government.

The complaint highlights that in May, Castro "made an

official trip to the United States where he held meetings with representatives of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)" and "publicly announced the intention to establish a cooperation agreement... [with] the DEA, aimed at 'strengthening the fight against trafficking and criminal factions.'"

In the context of his trip to the US:

It was reported that the governor forwarded a report and formal request to the North American government for Comando Vermelho and other factions to be classified as "narcoterrorist organizations," under the argument that such groups threaten international security.

Castro and Rio de Janeiro police authorities have repeatedly referred to the victims of last week's operation as "narcoterrorists." "This operation has very little to do with public security," the governor stated, adding, "it is a war."

The operation was conducted as a blood-soaked political spectacle amidst the efforts by Brazil's official political opposition—led by Castro and former president Jair Bolsonaro's fascistic Liberal Party—to approve a bill that expands the definition of terrorism to encompass common criminal organizations such as Comando Vermelho (CV) and Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC).

The bill is an expansion of the reactionary "Anti-Terrorism Law" approved in 2016 under PT President Dilma Rousseff's administration. It was introduced in Congress in March and was expedited in May, at the same time Castro was visiting the US.

On October 30, two days after the police operation, a delegation of far-right governors traveled to Rio de Janeiro with the declared purpose of launching an initiative for interstate coordination of repressive operations. Politically, the governors' conference was a platform to promote the efforts to rebrand CV and PCC as terrorist organizations.

This campaign is being promoted in coordination with fascistic political forces not just in Brazil, but throughout South America.

On October 28 and 30, respectively, Argentina and Paraguay branded CV and PCC as international terrorist organizations. The governments of both countries, which border southern Brazil, act as agents of Trump's geopolitical agenda in the region.

The government of fascist President Javier Milei, on October 20, signed an "anti-terrorism agreement" and a "training accord" with the FBI, aimed at fully subordinating the repressive apparatus of the Argentine state to US imperialism.

The Paraguayan government, in turn, is mobilizing massive military forces in the triple border area with Brazil and Argentina, where President Santiago Peña announced his intention to create an "anti-terrorist center" with agents trained by the FBI.

The legal redefinition of "terrorism" in Brazil obeys the same infamous geopolitical agenda of the "War on Narcoterrorism" which is the cover for a massive escalation of US imperialist aggression against Latin America.

The designation of Nicolás Maduro's government as "narcoterrorist" is the pretext adopted by Trump to foment a war for regime change against Venezuela.

The largest United States aircraft carrier, the USS Gerald R. Ford, is sailing toward the Caribbean Sea, where a naval armada and 10,000 sailors and marines are already mobilized. While daily striking small vessels, murdering nearly 70 civilians, in the country's vicinity, Trump openly speaks of a military invasion of Venezuela and CIA operations to "decapitate" the Maduro government.

The US may not be ready to invade Brazil with "F-35 fighters and warships," as suggested by Eduardo Bolsonaro, or to bomb fishing boats in Rio's Guanabara Bay, as his brother, Flávio Bolsonaro, advocated. But the hysteria about "narcoterrorism" being promoted by Brazilian fascists portends unprecedented interventions by Washington.

This narrative aims to establish a *de facto* state of "war" in the country to justify the abolition of democratic rights and the normalization of the violence witnessed in the Rio de Janeiro recent massacre against the working class as a whole.

Through the campaign against "narcoterrorism," the same forces that promoted the coup attempt of January 8, 2023 are continuing their fascist conspiracy and actively preparing its second act. Trump's dictatorial offensive in the United States is both their inspiration and their political base of support.

The ominous implications of Washington's recent intervention into the situation in Rio de Janeiro become even clearer when considering the deep crisis of Cláudio Castro's government, facing imminent threat of being removed from office.

Castro is being prosecuted by the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) for diverting 500 million reais (around US\$ 100 million) for hiring 45,000 irregular employees during the 2022 elections with the transparent aim of "buying" his reelection. On Tuesday, presiding Justice Isabel Gallotti voted for the removal

from office of both Castro and vice-governor Rodrigo Bacellar and an eight-year ban on their running for public office.

The question that lingers is: what will Trump's reaction be to Castro's possible removal?

In August, Trump declared a national emergency against Brazil, imposing 50 percent tariffs and drastic sanctions on Brazilian authorities. The measures were justified by accusing Brazil of "abolishing democracy" with the trial of former President Jair Bolsonaro (from the same party as Castro), who was convicted and sentenced to 27 years in prison for his attempted coup d'état.

Will Castro's eventual conviction be seized as a pretext for an aggressive resumption of intervention in Brazilian politics in the wake of the country's 2026 presidential elections?

The immense dangers posed to the Brazilian working class in the current situation are exacerbated by the criminal policy promoted by the Lula government and the PT.

On October 26, Lula met with Donald Trump for the first time during a conference in Malaysia. The Brazilian president offered his collaboration in pursuing US imperialism's objectives in Venezuela and lavished praise on the White House's would-be Führer.

"I am convinced that in a few days we will have a definitive solution between the United States and Brazil," Lula declared shortly after the meeting. "I return to Brazil satisfied and certain that everything will work out for the Brazilian people," added the president, who actually arrived in the country moments after the police massacre in Rio de Janeiro.

"Neither the tariffs nor the imperialist provocations ceased with the meeting between Lula and Trump on Sunday," the WSWs wrote in an article denouncing "Lula's conscious efforts to disarm the working class in the face of the growing threat of fascism and imperialist aggression."

It is urgent for the Brazilian working class to break with the PT and its pseudo-left backers and build an independent political leadership to fight imperialism and fascism through the methods of the international socialist revolution.



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