

Lula government officially acknowledges threat of US military aggression against Brazil

Tomas Castanheira
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In an official communication to the Chamber of Deputies, Brazil's Foreign Ministry (Itamaraty) officially acknowledged that the designation of the Brazilian gangs First Capital Command (PCC) and the Red Command (CV) as "foreign terrorist organizations" by the Trump administration raises the threat of US military aggression against Brazil.

The document, signed by Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira, came in response to an Information Request from far-right Congressman Evair Vieira de Melo (Republicanos-ES). It was made public last week. Its language is direct: "This unilateral classification could be invoked as justification for extraterritorial actions against Brazilian institutions, particularly in the financial, migratory and criminal spheres. There is, moreover, the risk of the use of US military force against national territory."

Asked by GloboNews about the basis for these statements, the Foreign Ministry replied that the minister "drew on recent episodes in the region, such as the cases of Venezuela, Cuba and Colombia: in January, a US military operation in Caracas led to the arrest of then-President Nicolás Maduro. The Venezuelan capital was bombed on that occasion; last October, the United States attacked boats off the Colombian coast, alleging they were operated by suspected drug traffickers; and Trump recently said that Cuba 'is next' when asked about US attacks on Iran."

These statements carry profound political implications. For the first time, the government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Workers Party—PT) expressly acknowledges the threat that had been implicit from the very beginning of the escalation of Trump's imperialist provocations against Brazil.

In August 2025, when Washington decreed 50 percent tariffs and declared a "national emergency" against Brazil, the *World Socialist Web Site* described the measures as "an unprecedented escalation of US imperialist aggression against Latin America," written "as a declaration of war against an enemy country." The WSWs compared the "warlike measures being taken against Brazil" to the "declaration of a 'national emergency' against Venezuela made by the Obama administration exactly 10 years earlier," which suggested that "a more direct intervention is being contemplated, including by military means."

Throughout the entire period since, the Brazilian government has devoted itself to covering up and downplaying the looming imperialist threat. In early May of this year, Lula visited the White House and, after soft-pedaling Washington's attacks on Venezuela, Cuba and Iran, complacently declared: "Trump likes

Brazil" and "will have no influence whatsoever on the Brazilian elections."

Washington announced the designation of the Brazilian criminal organizations as Foreign Terrorist Organizations on May 28, less than a month after Lula's visit and just two days after Senator and fascist presidential pre-candidate Flávio Bolsonaro met with Trump in the Oval Office. At the G7 summit in Évian-les-Bains on June 17, Trump declared of Brazil: "It's become a country that's a little tough, politically. A little bit dangerous, politically. It's a little bit nasty."

That the Brazilian diplomatic apparatus should now announce that the threat is real, far from representing an anti-imperialist turn, is an expression of the sharpening of political tensions across the continent and of the Lula government's own desperate situation.

The Foreign Ministry's declaration was met with fury from Brazil's fascistic opposition and the US government itself.

A State Department source called the foreign minister's warning "absurd," telling the newspaper *O Globo* that "vague allegations" of a supposed intervention tend to "serve as a pretext to aid and give cover to some of the most violent groups in the world." To call "absurd" the risk of military action six months after the bombing of Caracas and the abduction of the Venezuelan president is a statement whose cynicism speaks for itself.

In Congress, the fascistic opposition responded by openly siding with Washington against its own country's Foreign Ministry. In direct reaction to Vieira's statement, the Chamber of Deputies' Foreign Relations and National Defense Committee approved, on July 8, his mandatory summons to appear. The opposition leader, Congressman Cabo Gilberto Silva (PL-PB), explained: "This request is over new facts, over grave, unfortunate, opportunistic statements by the minister who represents President Lula abroad. There is nothing here about an attack on sovereignty. This is nonsense from the Lula government. We have a population living under the domination of drug trafficking."

In the Senate, the Foreign Relations Committee approved the day before an invitation for the foreign minister to appear, proposed by Senator Hamilton Mourão (Republicanos-RS), a reserve Army general and former vice president of Jair Bolsonaro. His justification bears attention: "I would like to hear where he got the data for a statement of this gravity. Despite [the recent military interventions], it draws attention given the relationship we have with the US, including in the military sphere."

Mourão's statement lays bare the fact that the Brazilian military

establishment cultivates its own axis of relations with US imperialism, above and independently of the civilian government. Four years ago, the Armed Forces were divided over whether to back the fascist coup attempt led by Bolsonaro. A decisive factor was reported disapproval from Washington—whose officials met with Brazilian military commanders to dissuade them from the coup adventure that culminated in the January 8, 2023, attack in Brasilia. It is this same military establishment that today treats it as scandalous for Brazilian diplomacy to name US imperialism’s criminal threats as what they are.

Brazil’s Defense Minister meets Pentagon official in Lima

Brazil’s Defense Minister José Múcio flew to Cusco, Peru, on Tuesday for the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas (CMDA). The central event in Múcio’s agenda was a bilateral meeting with US Under Secretary of War Elbridge Colby. According to *O Globo*, the stated goal of the meeting was to “build a peaceful climate with the US” and establish “a permanent channel of dialogue” with Trump’s Department of War.

The message that Lula’s Defense minister brought to the meeting diverges sharply from Itamaraty’s warning. *O Globo* reported that the Defense Ministry’s own assessment is that “there is no risk of military action” by the US against Brazil

Múcio’s trip to Peru follows recent visits to Argentina and Chile—headed respectively by Javier Milei and Antono Kast, two of the most reactionary and US-aligned governments in the region—in a kind of diplomatic-military tour. The CMDA is being held in Peru days after Keiko Fujimori—daughter of the former dictator Alberto Fujimori—was proclaimed president-elect, and following the victory of the fascistic lawyer Abelardo de la Espriella in Colombia’s elections. With Fujimori and de la Espriella now on board, most governments in the region are formally aligned with Trump’s “Shield of the Americas.”

Addressing the Latin American defense ministers gathered in Lima, Colby laid out Washington’s doctrine:

No longer do we separate America’s defense strategy from the concerns of regular Americans — from the flood of lethal drugs into their communities and the accompanying horrendous violence, or from the impact of unchecked illegal migration into our nation. [...] The best tradition of the Monroe Doctrine is about protecting our own security and interests by empowering and enabling Latin American nations.

Colby further demanded that countries in the region raise their defense spending to 3.5 percent of GDP and “protect their critical assets” from outside actors—a transparent reference to China, with rolling back its considerable economic influence in the region the central strategic objective of Washington’s offensive.

It was with this program that Múcio came to negotiate. According to a Defense Ministry statement, his bilateral meeting with Colby on Wednesday “took place in a climate of cordiality and convergence of views.” The statement continues: “Among other topics, the US raised the matter of cooperation in combating drug trafficking [...]. The US noted that it is seeking partners on the continent to work on this fight and said it sees Brazil as a great potential partner. Minister José Múcio expressed interest in the partnership.”

Days after the Brazilian Foreign Minister officially warned that Washington’s “narco-terrorism” framework carries the risk of US military force being used against national territory, the Defense Minister declares “convergence of views” with the Pentagon and “interest” in making Brazil a partner within that very same framework.

Múcio’s trip is not an individual aberration, nor a simple “difference of assessment” between ministries. It is the concentrated expression of the character of the Lula government. Múcio was installed at the Defense Ministry in 2023 precisely as the civilian operator of conciliation with the barracks—with the very same armed forces that prepared the January 8 coup attempt and that, as Mourão’s statement attests, maintain their own independent axis of relations with Washington, apart from the government that formally commands them. This policy of conciliation with the coup-plotting military and with US imperialism is now being put to the test by Brazil’s ongoing presidential election: the conditions of crisis that in 2022 culminated in the fascist coup attempt have only escalated, now in the face of Washington’s open intervention into Brazilian politics.

The struggle against US imperialist violence against Brazil will not come from Lula and the PT, nor from any faction of the Brazilian bourgeoisie. It requires the independent political mobilization of the Brazilian working class, in unity with workers in the United States and throughout Latin America, against imperialist war and the capitalist system that engenders it. This is the perspective for which the Socialist Equality Group (GSI) fights, in political solidarity with the International Committee of the Fourth International.



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