

Under Trump's protection, Brazil's defeated candidate Flávio Bolsonaro floats parallel government on US soil

Andrea Lobo
28 October 2026

Hours after landing in Miami on Wednesday, having fled Brazil in defiance of a Supreme Court order, Flávio Bolsonaro, the fascistic candidate defeated in Sunday's presidential runoff, issued a letter declaring himself "the true president-elect of Brazil." Later that day he released a revised version in which he addressed himself as "the leader of Brazil."

"The criminals who stole the election of Brazil are part of a criminal organization that implemented a tyranny," the letter declares. Addressing the senators, deputies and governors he helped elect, Bolsonaro wrote: "I will lead the opposition from here. I will say what you, there, cannot say, and I will take the risks you cannot run."

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of the Workers' Party (PT) won by 4.4 million votes. The fraud claim rests on an extension of voting hours that Bolsonaro's own Liberal Party (PL) had requested. According to the electoral court, only about 34,000 votes were cast after 5 p.m. The PL and Bolsonaro's running mate have both recognized the result.

The State Department announced on Tuesday that it would issue visas to the Bolsonaros. Donald Trump, who declared that the vote "looked like another rigged election," said he would "approve" their entry.

What is unfolding is another coup attempt against the elected government of the hemisphere's second most populous country, carried out openly by Washington. After more than a year of economic war, Washington now hosts a parallel leadership that operates from US soil, under US protection, for the whole world to see.

The Trump administration had already announced a 50 percent tariff last year on "any and all Brazilian products," imposed in a bid to halt the prosecution of former President Jair Bolsonaro for leading a fascist coup attempt to overturn Lula's victory in 2022.

There followed sanctions on Justice Alexandre de Moraes and visa revocations for Supreme Court judges. This year Washington designated Brazil's two largest gangs as terrorist organizations, received Flávio at the White House in the middle of the campaign, revoked the visa of Brazil's ambassador and, in July, imposed new tariffs of 25 percent and 12.5 percent.

Flávio Bolsonaro, Jair's son, denounces in his letter a "witch hunt" and "censorship," claims persecution of "even American citizens" and hails Trump as "a great defender of freedom of expression." It is a brief for the next stage of intervention.

The letter also reveals what Bolsonaro intended to do in power. Moraes, he writes, "would very probably be in prison if they had not prevented my inauguration." The meaning is plain: a Bolsonaro presidency would have jailed the Supreme Court justice who oversaw his father's prosecution.

He calls on his allies to elect Rogério Marinho as Senate president, the post that decides whether to open impeachment proceedings against Supreme Court justices.

The court, he writes, is "captured by the PT criminal organization," already setting the stage for Washington to escalate its regime change operation by declaring the Lula administration as criminal or "narco-terrorist."

"This is only the beginning of our struggle," Bolsonaro writes, making an appeal to "Brazilian institutions" to "restore the balance between the Powers."

The appeal is not vague. For years, Bolsonarism has claimed that Article 142 of the Constitution makes the Armed Forces a "moderating power" entitled to intervene when the branches of government clash. The Supreme Court unanimously rejected that reading in 2024. The call to "restore the balance between the Powers" is addressed to the generals.

Both the escape and the coup follow his father's script. Jair Bolsonaro flew to Florida on December 30, 2022, two days before Lula's inauguration, while his supporters camped outside army headquarters demanding military intervention. On January 8, they stormed the seats of the three branches of government in Brasília.

His conviction, alongside those of top generals and an admiral, punished certain individuals but preserved the military as an institution. As the Socialist Equality Group warned in October: "In a republic where the military has arrogated to itself the role of arbiter since its founding, military intervention remains an option on the table for the ruling class."

The coup of 1964 was made in this way, with Washington's backing. In a recorded 1962 Oval Office meeting with

President John F. Kennedy, aide Richard Goodwin said, “We may very well want them [the Brazilian military] to take over at the end of the year, if they can.” In 1964, the Johnson administration readied Operation Brother Sam to back the generals who overthrew President João Goulart. What was then prepared covertly through the CIA is now conducted openly from the White House.

Bolsonaro compares himself to Charles de Gaulle, who “led Free France from London, condemned to death by the Vichy regime, and returned to liberate his country.” De Gaulle, it should be recalled, returned behind the Allied armies.

He also invokes José Martí, who organized Cuba's independence struggle from New York. On the eve of his death in 1895, however, Martí wrote that his task was “to prevent in time, through the independence of Cuba, the United States from spreading over the Antilles and falling, with that added force, upon our lands of America.” He added, “I lived in the monster, and I know its entrails.”

His Venezuelan heroes are more precise. Bolsonaro cites Juan Guaidó, the self-proclaimed president of 2019, who served as cover for US sanctions and coup attempts, while never running for President. The letter also mentions the right-wing opposition candidate Edmundo González and the CIA asset María Corina Machado.

When US forces seized Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in January, Trump dismissed Machado, saying she lacked “the support within or the respect within the country,” and dealt with Maduro's Vice President Delcy Rodríguez instead. Machado returned last Sunday, with Washington's approval, to what has become a US protectorate.

But Brazil is not Venezuela, and events will not follow the same script. Bolsonaro received 59.8 million votes, and his party holds the largest bloc in Congress. A leadership in exile gives this fascist coterie a command center beyond the reach of Brazilian courts, and hands Washington an instrument of destabilization against Latin America's largest economy.

The flight itself was coordinated across borders. On Sunday night, Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who oversees an investigation into money laundering and currency evasion in which Flávio is deeply implicated, cancelled his Brazilian passports, ordered him to surrender any foreign travel documents within 24 hours and barred him from leaving Brazil. On Monday, Bolsonaro called the order a “clear attempt to intimidate me” and declared, “I never thought about leaving the country. I will hand over my passports.”

Within hours, the jet that would carry him out was parked at Puerto Iguazú, on the Argentine side of the border. On Tuesday the deadline passed, and Brazilian authorities warned the Javier Milei government that he might try to cross.

At 10:50 p.m., Bolsonaro, his wife and two daughters crossed from Foz do Iguaçu into Argentina. Forty minutes later they boarded a Gulfstream G400 private jet with a flight plan for Guayaquil, Ecuador, where it refueled before continuing to

Miami. CBS News Miami reported that he entered the US on an Italian passport.

According to the Uruguayan daily *El Observador*, Argentine President Javier Milei “had the details of the operation.” Bolsonaro thanked him in the letter “for his courage, sense of justice and legality.”

The jet belongs to Baires Fly. Prosecutors have named the firm and its manager, Sergio Mastropietro, a former partner of the convicted money launderer and accused drug trafficker Federico “Fred” Machado, as the “heads of laundering” in a bribery scandal engulfing Milei's government.

Bolsonaro himself is under investigation for money laundering, and another inquiry is examining his campaign's relations with the Rockbridge Network, a donor network co-founded by Vice President JD Vance.

The same night, a US strike on a boat in the eastern Pacific killed five more people accused without evidence of “narcotrafficking,” bringing the toll to at least 243. Washington blows up small boats in the name of fighting “narco-terrorism” while sheltering drug-trafficking criminal and fascistic forces upon which it relies to subordinate Latin America. This is the “Shield of the Americas,” Trump's coalition with Milei and other right-wing governments, at work.

The Democrats' response makes them complicit. As of this writing, their leaders in Congress, Chuck Schumer and Hakeem Jeffries, have said nothing about the welcoming of Bolsonaro or the parallel government being plotted from US soil, and no Democrat has demanded that Bolsonaro's visa be revoked.

The Biden administration, too, let Jair Bolsonaro stay in Florida until the end of March 2023.

The Lula government's own response is spineless. Lula called the flight “shameful” and said the Bolsonaros' first homeland was “licking the boots of the United States.” But his ministers have blamed Moraes for turning Bolsonaro “from criminal to persecuted.” The Foreign Ministry treats as a matter for “the judicial sphere” what is an act of foreign aggression. No protest has been lodged with Washington.



To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact