

Milei and Bolsonaro attend fascist CPAC conference in Brazil

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In the first weekend of July, Brazil's version of the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) brought together leading international fascist figures in the Latin American country. Present at the conference were former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, Argentine President Javier Milei, and the Chilean *Pinochetista* Antonio Kast, as well as representatives of the Portuguese *Chega* (Enough) party and of Nayib Bukele's government of El Salvador.

It was the fifth meeting of Brazil's CPAC, organized since 2019 by Eduardo Bolsonaro, a Brazilian congressman and son of the former president. Eduardo cultivates close relations with global fascist forces, including Donald Trump and his political circle in the US, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) and Latin American and Spanish and Portuguese parties linked to the Madrid Forum. In 2021, he traveled to Washington to closely monitor the January 6 coup in the US, which served as a model for his father's January 8 coup attempt in 2023 in Brazil.

Eduardo Bolsonaro took part in two other CPAC events this year, one in the US in February and the other in Hungary in April, where Trump and Hungarian President Viktor Orbán spoke, respectively. On these occasions, he advocated the freedom of those he described as the "hostages of January 8," a reference to individuals criminally prosecuted for the storming of the government headquarters in Brasilia in 2023. He also accused the Supreme Court (STF) of implementing a censorship regime in Brazil.

These and other themes dear to the global far right—such as attacks on the right to abortion, hysterical denunciations of so-called "gender ideology" in school curriculums, and "globalism"—were addressed by speakers at the Brazilian CPAC last weekend. The event had the immediate goal of boosting the campaigns of far-right candidates, particularly from Bolsonaro's Liberal Party (PL), for Brazil's local elections that take place in October.

But more crucially, the conference aimed at launching and displaying international official support for a campaign in defense of Bolsonaro and the political legitimacy of his attempted coup.

Investigations against Bolsonaro by the Federal Police (PF), whose rapporteur is STF Justice Alexandre de Moraes, are reaching a critical point. Last week, the PF indicted the former

president and 11 of his allies for money laundering, criminal association, and appropriation of public assets through the illegal sale of official gifts, mainly luxury jewelry, received from foreign governments. The evidence collected by the PF against Bolsonaro is extensive and robust.

More significantly, the PF report points out that Bolsonaro used part of the money received to finance his stay in the US, where he traveled just before the inauguration of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Workers Party-PT). This was used as an alibi to dissociate himself from the January 8, 2023 events in Brasilia. In the coming weeks, it is also expected that the PF will conclude its investigation of Bolsonaro's involvement in the coup attempt and may present charges against the ex-president.

At CPAC, Bolsonaro declared: "Although the PF came to my house three times, [and] I have more than 300 lawsuits. It's worth it. We won't back down." He also criticized last year's TSE (Supreme Electoral Court) decision that made him ineligible to run for office until 2030.

Hailing the rise of the far right around the world, Bolsonaro said: "The European Parliament has taken a strong turn to the right, [in Argentina] there's Milei, there's [Prime Minister Georgia] Meloni in Italy, there were elections in France, God willing ... [we'll have] Trump in November in the US."

He ended his speech by calling for people to vote "with reason" in the 2026 Brazilian presidential elections, arguing that "The composition of the TSE has already changed. If we have a sizable parliamentary caucus ... be sure that we'll make a better history for all of us through parliament."

Among the bills that the parliamentarians associated with Bolsonaro are currently seeking to approve is an amnesty for those convicted for political violence and crimes associated with his attempt to overturn the last presidential elections and install a military dictatorship in Brazil. This would include the former president himself and the military commanders who supported his dictatorial conspiracy. The congressmen also have on their agenda measures to impeach STF justices. By 2026, two STF justices appointed by Bolsonaro will sit on the Supreme Electoral Court, which could pave the way to reverse his ineligibility.

In this sense, Bolsonaro and his allies aim to reenact in Brazil

what the government of President Nayib Bukele has done in El Salvador. Bukele's Minister of Justice and Public Security, Gustavo Villatoro, declared at CPAC: "We sent the Supreme Court of Justice '*al carajo*' [to hell]. And not only that, we sent also the Federal Prosecutor '*al carajo*.'"

The policies of mass imprisonment and "zero tolerance" for petty crimes implemented by the Bukele government have also been hailed by Bolsonaro and his allies in Brazil. The governor of São Paulo and Bolsonaro's former minister, Tarcísio de Freitas, declared at CPAC that "in São Paulo there will be no land invasions" by movements demanding agrarian reform—referring to the PT-linked Landless Workers Movement (MST)—and that "organized crime ... will no longer have a place" in the state under his rule. In addition, Freitas has implemented a broad program of privatizations and attacks on social services, particularly against education, along the same line pursued by Milei in Argentina.

In a highly provocative political gesture, Milei attended the Brazilian CPAC conference as his first visit to the neighboring country after being inaugurated president of Argentina last December.

In his speech at the event, Milei denounced the "judicial persecution suffered by our friend Jair Bolsonaro here" in Brazil. He also defended the cuts in "public spending" that he is currently implementing, leading to record impoverishment in Argentina. As usual, Milei ranted against socialism, which he falsely associates with the bourgeois nationalist governments of the Latin American "Pink Tide." He said that Nicolás Maduro, who will run in the next elections in Venezuela at the end of the month, "uses poverty" to "stay in power," denounced Bolivia's Luis Arce for opportunistically plotting a "self-coup" in June, and condemned the "murderous dictatorships in Cuba and Nicaragua."

Milei's visit to Brazil intensified a diplomatic crisis with the Lula government. During his election campaign in Argentina, Milei called Lula, who supported Peronist candidate Sergio Massa, a "communist" and "corrupt." Before arriving in Brazil for CPAC, the Argentinian president refused to apologize for those insults and issued new attacks against Lula.

Besides trampling over every diplomatic protocol in his provocative visit, Milei's participation in the conference in Brazil coincided with the annual Mercosur meeting in Paraguay which he ostensibly boycotted. After he threatened during his electoral campaign to pull Argentina out of the economic bloc also composed of Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, and new member Bolivia, Argentine Foreign Minister Diana Mondino advocated "updating Mercosur" to make it more open and liberal.

An explosive element of the intensifying crisis between Brazil and Argentina has been the presence on Argentinian soil of at least 48 Brazilian fugitives convicted for the January 8 uprising in Brasilia, who are asking for political asylum from Milei's government. The fact that Milei denounced the "judicial persecution" of Bolsonaro at CPAC indicates that his

government could grant political asylum not only to those fugitives but to the former president himself if he gets convicted in the coming period.

That political development highlights the efforts of Milei's administration not only to install a regime of brutal repression against the working class in Argentina but to convert the country into a center of organization of the far right across the continent. This counterrevolutionary project is not merely the product of the subjective intentions of despicable figures such as Milei and Bolsonaro, but reflects, more deeply, the interests of the rotting Latin American bourgeoisie and its imperialist patrons.

Significantly, the politicians behind the Latin American version of CPAC have served as the most direct advocates of US and European imperialism's agenda in the region. They have systematically fought to undermine the reluctance of governments, particularly those associated to the Pink Tide, to align their countries unequivocally with NATO's positions on the war against Russia in Ukraine and Israel's genocide in Gaza.

The growth of fascist forces and authoritarianism across Latin America is inextricably connected to the drive of imperialism towards a third world war. As they seek to escalate war in the region against their so-called "strategic adversaries," mainly China, Washington and the European capitals rely on their historically established ties with the local ruling classes and military. It is not an accident that Milei and Bolsonaro are enthusiastic supporters of the US-backed military dictatorships in Brazil (1964-1985) and Argentina (1976-1983).

The Latin American and international working class must face these events with the gravest seriousness. It must reject all the minimizing by the governments of the "Pink Tide" and their supporters on the pseudo-left of the threats posed by escalating global war and fascist coups and dictatorships. It must fight to organize itself as an independent political force and confront the origin of these threats, the capitalist system.



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