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UN: Authorities Should Allow Lula to Participate in Brazilian Elections, Respect 'Political Rights'

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The decision includes Lula's right to participate in media events and debates.

The United Nations' Human Rights Committee has determined that the Brazilian state must “take all necessary measures” to allow Brazilian presidential candidate [Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva](#) to exercise his full political rights as a candidate in the October presidential elections.

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The decision, which includes Lula's right to participate in media events and debates, as well as convene with members of his Workers' Party, comes despite the fact that the former head of state remains imprisoned at Curitiba's federal police station. The U.N. committee also said Lula should not be prevented from participating in the elections until all of his legal appeals have been exhausted, per Brazil's Constitution.

Lula has continued to stay in touch with supporters and citizens via regular media releases and letters. On Thursday, he sent a Twitter message warning about threats to the country's sovereignty.

"Brazil must open its eyes and impede" the senate-president [Michel Temer](#) from "handing over the Alcantara missile and rocket launching base to the [United States of America](#)," he said.

"An American military base in our territory harms our sovereignty and is a threat to our position of peace and dialogue in the world." The former head of state and co-founder of the Workers' Party concluded that "We can't go back and become a colony to no one."

James Mattis, the U.S. Secretary of Defense, [began his first South American](#) tour last Sunday when he arrived in Brazil. He met with senior officials and defense leaders to discuss, among a host of issues, U.S. participation in the Alcantara military space station. He also spoke at the Escola Superior de Guerra, the country's college for politics, defense and strategy.

"We want to be your partner, especially if trouble looms," Mattis told students and others in attendance.

"Our native languages may be different, but four decades of military service have persuaded me that the profession of arms has a language of its own and a way of turning strangers into the family... I want any adversary to know that they are better off to deal with our secretary of state and our diplomats. They do not want to deal with my soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines and me."

Shortly after visiting Lula at Curitiba's Federal Police Station, Brazil's former Foreign Minister, Celso Amorim, said Lula is outraged by Temer's submission to the U.S. Secretary of Defense.

"The times when a U.S. representative came to (Brazil) to give orders had passed, but now they are returning. The former president is outraged by the handing over of our sovereignty, which threatens Petrobras and public banks," Amorim said.

Mattis' agenda included visits to defense authorities in [Argentina](#), Chile, and Colombia according to details provided by the Department of Defence.

Ties between the United States and the governments of Brazil and Argentina have improved considerably since the impeachment process against elected president Dilma Rousseff, and the victory of businessman Mauricio Macri in Argentina.

Since then, Brazil's unelected president Michel Temer has invited the U.S. to use the Alcantara missile and rocket launching base and to conduct joint military exercises in the Amazon, while Argentina's Macri reached an agreement with the U.S. in 2016, allowing the U.S. to build three bases.

Despite his conviction and imprisonment for corruption, events that many legal

experts and observers attribute to lawfare and a salacious mainstream media campaign, Lula has topped every 2018 electoral poll conducted by Vox Populi, Ibope, Datafolha, Data Poder 360, Instituto Parana, the National Confederation of Transportation/MDA and Ipsos.

Lula's two terms in office were marked by a slew of social programs, lifting millions of Brazilians out of poverty and removing the country from the United Nations World Hunger Map. He left office with a record approval rating of 83 percent in 2011, according to Datafolha.

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