

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 12, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to express grave concern regarding the recent invasion of the National Congress of Brazil, the Palácio do Planalto presidential palace, and the Supreme Court in Brasilia, Brazil by supporters of former President Jair Bolsonaro. Two years ago, the United States faced a similar assault on our democracy. We know firsthand the impact—both immediate and long-term—when government officials subvert democratic norms, spread misinformation, and foment violent extremism. We applaud your administration’s condemnation of the events in Brasilia and believe it is imperative that the United States continues to strongly and publicly denounce this attack and maintain support for the democracy and the rule of law in Brazil and across the Western Hemisphere. Furthermore, we must not allow Mr. Bolsonaro or any other former Brazilian officials to take refuge in the United States to escape justice for any crimes they may have committed when in office, and we should cooperate fully with any investigation by the Brazilian government into their actions, if requested.

The unlawful and violent attack on January 8 against Brazilian government institutions was built upon months of pre- and post-election fabrications by Mr. Bolsonaro and his allies claiming that the October 30 presidential election had been stolen. This was not the first time Mr. Bolsonaro threatened democratic institutions: on September 2021, Mr. Bolsonaro openly threatened the Supreme Court while addressing crowds in Brasilia and São Paulo. Prior to the presidential elections, Mr. Bolsonaro pushed the false claim that the electronic voting system, which had been verified by multiple multilateral and independent organizations as secure, was faulty and fraudulent. His peddling of disinformation, his failure to call on supporters to accept the results of the election, and his active calls to mobilize against democratic institutions incited thousands of protestors to storm government buildings and to participate in the violent acts on January 8 against Brazil’s pillars of democracy.

Mr. Bolsonaro flew to Florida before the end of his presidential term and the inauguration of his successor, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and we are concerned by reports that he currently is residing in Orlando. The United States must not provide shelter for him, or any authoritarian who has inspired such violence against democratic institutions. We should cooperate fully with Brazilian authorities in investigating any role Mr. Bolsonaro or those around him played in the events of January 8, and any crimes he committed when in office.

As we understand, since Mr. Bolsonaro entered the United States when he was still the President of Brazil, he may have done so on an A-1 visa that is reserved for individuals on diplomatic or official visits. As he is no longer the President of Brazil or currently serving as a Brazilian official, we request that you reassess his status in the country to ascertain whether there is a legal basis for his stay and revoke any such diplomatic visa he may hold.

We also urge the Department of Justice and other relevant federal agencies to hold accountable, as appropriate, any actors based in Florida who may have financed or supported the violent crimes of January 8. We additionally ask that the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other relevant U.S. law enforcement agencies investigate any actions that were taken on United States soil to organize this attack on the Brazilian government.

We stand with the Brazilian people as they recover from this challenging time in their democratic history. As members of the United States House of Representatives, we call upon you to work with us to support the newly inaugurated President Luiz Inácio Lula de Silva and the Brazilian people in seeking justice, upholding the rule of law, and protecting democratic institutions in their country. This includes ensuring Mr. Bolsonaro is held accountable for his role in enabling these criminal acts and other crimes he may have committed. We look forward to working together to promote and protect democracy in Brazil and across the region.

Sincerely,



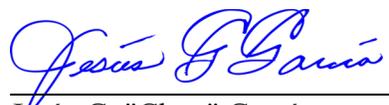
Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



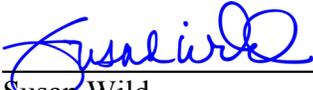
Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
Committee on Foreign
Affairs



Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Susan Wild
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



André Carson
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Chellie Pingree
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Nikema Williams
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Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
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Ro Khanna
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Barbara Lee
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James P. McGovern
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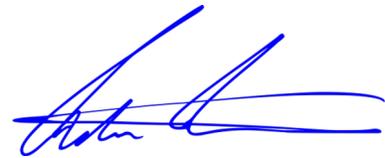
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



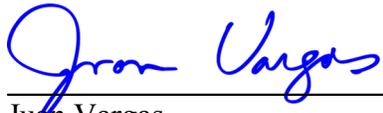
William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
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Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



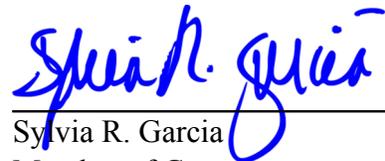
Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



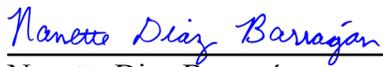
Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



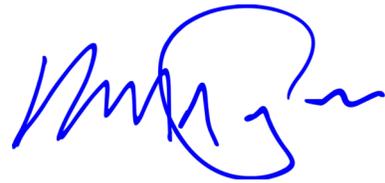
Nydia M. Velázquez
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Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Jake Auchincloss
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Colin Z. Allred
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
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Member of Congress



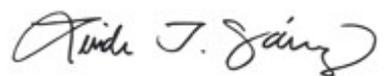
Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
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