

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C St NW, Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

We write to express our deep concern over the alarming suppression of free speech being orchestrated by the Brazilian Supreme Court, under the leadership of Chief Justice Alexandre de Moraes. Recent judicial actions targeting the social media platform X (formerly known as Twitter), and its owner, Elon Musk, are a direct affront to the principles of free expression and represent a dangerous shift towards authoritarianism in one of the Western Hemisphere's largest democracies.

**Alexandre de Moraes is acting like a totalitarian dictator.**

Chief Justice de Moraes has a well-documented history of curbing free speech, particularly against individuals and groups with conservative political views. His latest actions represent a culmination of a broader pattern of judicial overreach. X, a platform emblematic of free discourse, has been unjustly targeted, with de Moraes ordering the shutdown of the service in Brazil on questionable legal grounds. His judicial orders include not only the banning of certain political figures from social media but also extensive gag orders against media outlets and activists critical of the court's decisions. This overreach severely undermines Brazil's democratic institutions, placing the country's commitment to free speech in jeopardy.

In recent months, Justice de Moraes has employed the Supreme Court as a tool to stifle political dissent, disproportionately targeting conservative voices. Investigations and censorship orders have been systematically directed at opposition lawmakers, journalists, and activists, suppressing their ability to communicate with the public. In one particularly egregious move, the Brazilian Supreme Court froze the accounts of Starlink, a company owned by Musk, in an effort to compel compliance with unrelated demands regarding X. This is not just an attack on free speech, but a blatant abuse of judicial power designed to intimidate and coerce.

**Brazil is one of the world's largest democracies, let's keep it that way.**

These actions echo the hallmarks of authoritarian regimes that manipulate legal systems to silence dissent, creating a chilling effect on open dialogue and democratic participation. The court's ability to shut down a global platform like X not only affects the political landscape in Brazil but also sets a dangerous precedent for other nations in the region. As the second-largest democracy in the Western Hemisphere, Brazil has made significant strides toward consolidating its democratic institutions since the end of its military dictatorship in 1985. However, the recent actions of its judiciary are threatening to undo these hard-earned democratic gains. A free and open press, along with the right to criticize public officials, is the bedrock of any functioning democracy. Without these freedoms, Brazil risks backsliding into authoritarianism.

**Free Speech in Brazil must be protected.**

The repercussions of Brazil's current trajectory extend far beyond its borders. If a nation as influential as Brazil can effectively muzzle dissent and control political discourse through judicial fiat, it could inspire similar undemocratic practices across Latin America. The erosion of free speech in Brazil could set a dangerous precedent for the region,

threatening democratic governance throughout the hemisphere. It is imperative that the United States takes decisive action to uphold the values of democracy and free speech in Brazil. We must defend American companies like X and their owners when they face unlawful targeting, and we must stand firm in support of democratic principles wherever they are under threat. It is in the United States' national security interests to ensure that any visitors to our country do not actively seek to undermine democratic processes or institutions. Chief Justice de Moraes and his colleagues on the Brazilian Supreme Court are doing just that.

Therefore, we respectfully urge you to deny any application for U.S. visas or admission to the United States, including revoking any existing visas, for Chief Justice Alexandre de Moraes and the other members of the Brazilian Supreme Court complicit in these undemocratic practices. These justices have overstepped their constitutional boundaries, and their actions are eroding the very foundations of democratic governance in Brazil.

Standing up for free speech and democratic values is not just a matter of principle, but of ensuring the long-term stability of the Western Hemisphere. We trust that the United States will remain a steadfast defender of these ideals.

Sincerely,



María Elvira Salazar  
Member of Congress



Rick Scott  
United States Senator



Carlos A. Giménez  
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress



Rich McCormick  
Member of Congress