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Bolsonaro Begins 27-Year Prison Sentence for Attempting a Coup d'État

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Brazil's Supreme Court has upheld the sentence against Bolsonaro, who was sentenced to 27 years in prison after being found guilty of five crimes: attempting a coup d'état, attempting the abolition of democratic rule of law, leading a criminal organization, and causing damage to public property and protected heritage.



Original article: [Bolsonaro empieza a cumplir condena de 27 años por intento de golpe de Estado](#)

Former [Brazil](#) president Jair Bolsonaro has officially started serving a historic 27-year prison sentence for attempting a coup d'état against current President Lula Da Silva on January 8, 2023, following the Supreme Court's ruling on Tuesday which exhausted all appeal options.

The ex-president (2019-2022) had been under house arrest since August, but was transferred to a police complex in Brasília on Saturday due to «risk of flight,» after damaging his monitoring ankle bracelet with a soldering iron. Although his defense team argued that he experienced a «mental confusion» episode induced by medication, Brazil's highest court dismissed this explanation.

Supreme Court Judge Alexandre de Moraes, who is overseeing the case and is seen as a significant adversary by Bolsonaro supporters, rejected the defense's request to serve his sentence under house arrest, citing that the former Army captain suffers from recurrent gastrointestinal crises and hiccups, a consequence of a stabbing incident he endured in 2018.

However, Moraes decided against placing Bolsonaro in a maximum-security prison or military facility, allowing him to remain at Brazil's primary police headquarters in a roughly 12-square-meter room equipped with a bed, table, television, and air conditioning, comparable to the provisions given to Lula Da Silva in 2018.

27 Years Behind Bars for Attempting a Coup d'État

It is important to note that on September 11, the Supreme Court found Bolsonaro guilty of trying to prevent Lula Da Silva from taking office after defeating him in the October 2022 elections.

The ruling against Bolsonaro, which passed with a 4-1 vote, convicted him of five crimes: attempted coup d'état, attempted abolition of democratic rule of law, leading a

criminal organization, causing damage to public property, and damaging protected property.

The background reveals that the operation included an assault on the seats of the three powers of the State, conducted on January 8, 2023, when thousands of far-right activists attempted to enlist the Armed Forces to overthrow the newly elected progressive leader, who had taken office just a week prior.

According to the prosecution, the [coup plot](#) also involved plans to assassinate Lula, his vice president Geraldo Alckmin, and Supreme Court Judge Alexandre de Moraes. However, these crimes were not executed due to a lack of support from high-ranking military officials.

Four of the five judges on the Supreme Court panel voted to sentence the former president to 27 years and three months in prison for five crimes, including participating in an armed criminal organization, violently attempting to abolish democracy, and organizing a coup d'état.

Alongside Bolsonaro, some of his collaborators and military supporters involved in his criminal actions were also sentenced. Notably, Walter Braga Netto, the former Minister of the Civil House and one of Bolsonaro's most trusted allies, received a 26-year imprisonment sentence, starting in a closed regime.

Other convicted individuals include Augusto Heleno, former head of the Institutional Security Cabinet and a key military figure; Paulo Sérgio Nogueira, former Minister of Defense; and Mauro Cid, a former aide and informant who provided decisive evidence regarding the plot.

Braga Netto, Heleno, Nogueira, and Garnier are already incarcerated in military facilities, while a fifth convicted individual, police officer and former minister Anderson Torres, has been placed in the section designated for agents in a civil prison.

Bolsonaro: A Future Behind Bars

This marks the first time in Brazilian history that justice has convicted individuals for participating in a coup plot. In 1964, a coup d'état began two decades of military dictatorship.

This historic event has been highlighted by Brazilian media. «Coup plotters have always gone unpunished, both in power and out of it. Now, for the first time, officials who betrayed the Constitution will begin to pay for their crimes,» remarked columnist Bernardo Mello Franco in the newspaper O Globo, as reported by [El País](#).

If former president Bolsonaro were to serve the entirety of his sentence, he would be released at nearly 100 years of age. Brazilian criminal law, heavily focused on social reintegration, states that in such a serious case, the inmate must serve 25% of the sentence in closed conditions (which translates to six years for him) before transitioning to semi-liberty, allowing him to leave for work. The far-right leader has

been ineligible to run for elections since 2023, and since last August, was under house arrest with a prohibition on using social media.

His absence from the public scene and the silence mandated by the judge have weakened him politically. Efforts by his children and party to push for an amnesty law or a sentence reduction in Congress that could alleviate his prison term have so far been unsuccessful.

With Bolsonaro in jail, Brazil not only sees a former president imprisoned for the third time in its democratic history—following Lula, whose convictions were annulled, and Fernando Collor de Mello, who is currently under house arrest—but also sets a historic precedent: justice can indeed reach the most powerful, including those who attempt to undermine democracy from the highest institutions.

Fuente: [El Ciudadano](#)