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## U.S. Slaps Sanctions on Brazilian Justice for Role in Bolsonaro Case

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The U.S. Treasury Department has imposed sanctions on Brazilian Supreme Federal Court (STF – *Supremo Tribunal Federal*) Justice Alexandre de Moraes, citing human rights abuses and suppression of free speech tied to the controversial trial of former President Jair Bolsonaro. The move adds pressure to Brazil’s judicial system, raising questions over fairness, political motivations, and democratic principles in the country’s handling of high-profile cases.

Justice de Moraes, who is overseeing the legal proceedings against Bolsonaro, stands accused of carrying out an “oppressive campaign” of censorship and politically charged prosecutions. According to U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent, de Moraes is responsible for a series of arbitrary arrests and human rights violations, including actions taken against Bolsonaro, a staunch conservative and ally of former U.S. President Donald Trump. In addition to the sanctions, the Treasury has ordered the freezing of any assets or property de Moraes may have under U.S. jurisdiction.

This action follows a broader trend of growing U.S. scrutiny toward Brazil’s judiciary. Just weeks prior, on July 18, the U.S. State Department announced visa restrictions targeting Brazilian judicial figures, including de Moraes. The decision underscores Washington’s unease with the legal tactics being employed in the high-profile case, which critics say is less about justice and more about eliminating political opposition.

Former President Bolsonaro is accused of orchestrating a plan to remain in office despite losing the 2022 presidential election to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Bolsonaro and his supporters have long maintained that the charges are politically motivated and part of a broader effort to silence conservative voices in Brazil. De Moraes’s role in overseeing the trial has drawn significant backlash from Bolsonaro’s base and international observers alike.

Adding to the tension, President Trump recently announced a 50% tariff on Brazilian imports, set to take effect this Friday. In his July 9 statement, Trump tied the steep tariff directly to what he described as the “witch hunt” against Bolsonaro. The connection between the economic penalty and the judicial case signals strong disapproval from the U.S. regarding Brazil’s internal political and legal maneuvers.

Neither Brazil’s Supreme Court nor the Office of the President responded immediately to requests for comment on the sanctions. However, the silence may speak volumes as international criticism mounts over what some argue is a judiciary being weaponized for political purposes.

With the U.S. now taking concrete steps, both economic and diplomatic, against key figures in Brazil’s justice system, the international spotlight is firmly on the country’s handling of the Bolsonaro trial. Whether this pressure will shift the outcome or further polarize Brazil’s political landscape remains to be seen.