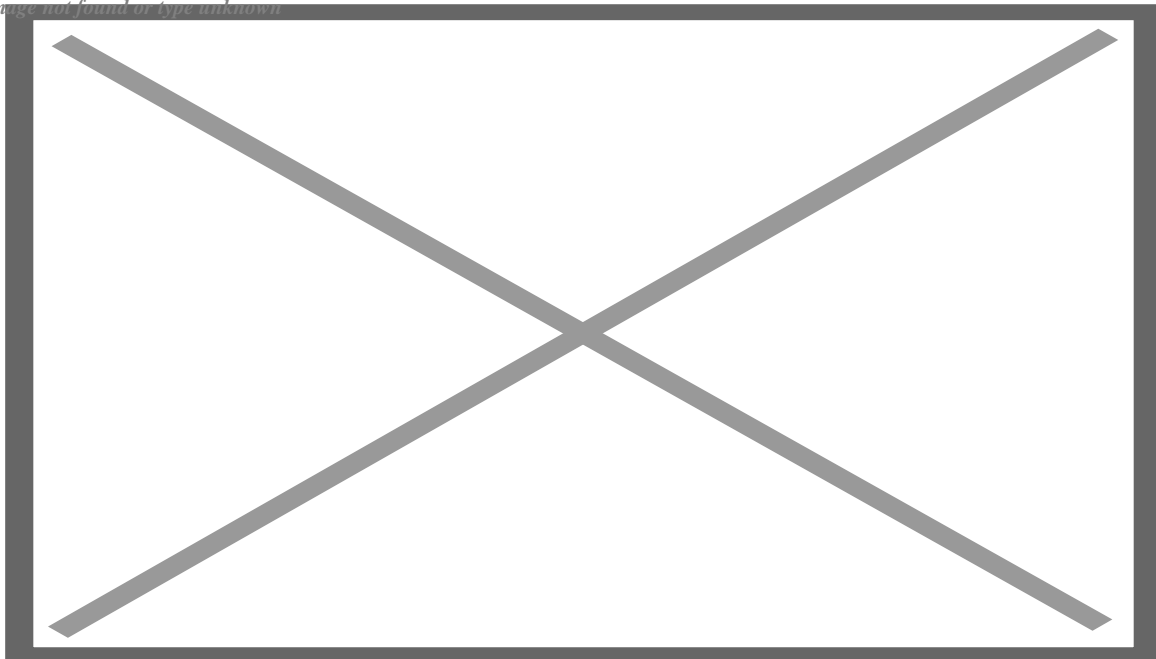


# *Brazilian judge says country was ruled by groups with paramilitary ties*

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**Jair Bolsonaro (R), his son (L), and Brazilians linked to far-right groups. | Photo: Twitter/  
@AgdaOli96919401**

Lisbon, February 5 (RHC)-- In Brazil, Supreme Court Judge Gilmar Mendes denounced that his country was being ruled by elites that had support from Rio de Janeiro's paramilitary groups.

"We were being governed by people in the shadows. This is a fact of reality. People from the Rio de Janeiro militia had a leading role in national politics," he told to journalists at the 2023 LIDE Brazilian Investment Forum in Lisbon, Portugal.

The Supreme Court judge was referring to statements made by Senator Marcos do Val, who accused former President Jair Bolsonaro of trying to convince him to stage a coup to prevent Workers' Party leader Lula da Silva from assuming the Presidency on January 1st.

"We lowered the political degradation scale," Mendes said and called for reforming the Brazilian security forces since the attack on public institutions carried out by far-right militants in Brasilia evidenced "a bankruptcy of the security system."

"History teaches that leniency is not the best way to deal with criminals. They need to be punished with the rigor of the law," said Brazil's Accounts Court President Bruno Dantas, who was also participating in the 2023 LIDE Forum.

"The full identification of those involved is a job that is in charge of the Police. But when we have the list of vandals, we will hold them accountable," Dantas explained, adding that some 3.2 million euros have been blocked in the accounts of some far-right militants so far.

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