

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 15, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rubio:

We write to express urgent concern over the accelerating influence of the BRICS bloc—especially China and Russia—throughout Latin America. Their strategic expansion threatens to erode democratic governance, empower authoritarian actors, and diminish U.S. influence across the Western Hemisphere. In response, we respectfully urge you to seize new opportunities to push back against their strategic expansion in the Western Hemisphere, particularly by strengthening engagement and support for emerging democratic and reform-minded leaders in Bolivia and continuing to deepen engagement with U.S.-aligned leaders in Argentina, Ecuador, and Panama.

In Colombia and Venezuela, BRICS-aligned activity is deepening regional instability. President Gustavo Petro's engagement with Beijing and Moscow in pursuit of economic cooperation risks subordinating Colombia's sovereignty to external powers.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, the Maduro regime's partnerships with China, Russia, and Iran continue to sustain an anti-democratic dictatorship that exports instability, facilitates transnational crime and terrorism, and undermines U.S. regional objectives. Together, these countries illustrate how BRICS members exploit economic and security dependencies to consolidate authoritarian influence and weaken U.S.-aligned institutions.

In Brazil, the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has openly embraced ties with U.S. adversaries as a member of BRICS. Lula has lauded the fact that Brazil is the leading destination for Chinese investment in Latin America, deepening cooperation with China on port and rail infrastructure as well as manufacturing and mining.<sup>3</sup> Brazil has also hosted port calls by Iranian warships and has imported billions of dollars of Russian oil.<sup>45</sup>

At the same time, promising shifts are emerging elsewhere. Newly elected Bolivian President Rodrigo Paz is a reform-minded leader who is signaling he will re-engage Bolivia with the Western world and bring a renewed commitment to transparency, market-based reform, and

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/world/americas/colombia/article306480606.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://colombiareports.com/colombia-and-russia-reactivate-bilateral-ties/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/chinas-2024-brazil-investment-doubled-093000073.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/brazil-allows-two-iranian-warships-dock-rio-despite-us-pressure-2023-02-27/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://united24media.com/latest-news/brazil-faces-potential-us-tariffs-for-buying-russian-oil-says-nato-envoy-10465>

democratic accountability after decades of socialist rule.<sup>6</sup> We are grateful you have already met with Paz and look forward to working with you and other members of the Administration to seize this opportunity in Bolivia.

Additionally, the Administration can continue to build on its successful engagement with President Milei in Argentina, President Noboa in Ecuador, and President Mulino in Panama. All three countries have strengthened their ties with the United States, including new trade deals with Argentina and Ecuador, while beginning to roll back years of economic entanglement with the PRC. With additional strategic U.S. engagement, these nations can become critical anchors for a hemisphere that values freedom, rule of law, and independent governance.

We urge you to prioritize a coordinated strategy to counter BRICS malign influence across Latin America. This should include expanded diplomatic engagement with reform-oriented governments, increased development, and energy and critical mineral partnerships that promote Western alternatives. Strengthening democratic coalitions in the region is essential to ensuring that our allies remain resilient against coercive economic and political tactics from China and Russia.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this matter, and I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,



---

Jefferson Shreve  
Member of Congress



---

María Elvira Salazar  
Member of Congress




---

Keith Self  
Member of Congress



---

Cory Mills  
Member of Congress



---

Pat Harrigan  
Member of Congress

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.france24.com/en/americas/20251020-bolivia-us-president-elect>