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LETTER TO THE MINISTERS OF HEALTH OF THE BRICS' COUNTRIES

The Pan American Health Organization emerged at the beginning of the last century as this continent's response to the challenge of promoting the health of our people.

After facing successive epidemics of various diseases, the leaders of our nations realized that this mission could only be achieved through fraternal, science-based cooperation among all, as health threats ignore borders and refuse to wait for the resolution of regional rivalries to impose their devastating effects.

During the institution's more than one hundred years, Brazil has always been a great enthusiast of this space for dialogue, playing a role in developing measures such as the formulation of regional strategies for vector control of yellow fever and malaria, and mass vaccination campaigns for the eradication of smallpox and polio in the Americas.

Furthermore, Brazil, recognized for its policy of universal access to antiretrovirals, has influenced debates and programs on the strategic use of generics and contributed to the elimination of neglected diseases such as rubella, neonatal tetanus, and, more recently, lymphatic filariasis.

Brazilian science has also always supported the institution: Brazilian laboratories are part of PAHO's regional networks and serve as a reference for other countries. With the organization's support, Brazil was chosen as one of the centers for mRNA vaccine development in Latin America.

Today, my country's ability to continue contributing to these advances is hampered.

This Thursday (September 18th) I was informed of the US government's decision to restrict my movement within the country to a few blocks in New York, which prevents me from traveling to Washington, in flagrant violation of the Headquarters Agreement.

The visa is an essential condition for me to once again represent Brazil at the organization's next Board of Directors meeting, to be held between September 29th and October 3rd.

This is an arbitrary and authoritarian decision that violates international law and undermines harmonious cooperation between sovereign countries.

After revoking the visas of my wife and my ten-year-old daughter, the United States government is imposing unacceptable restrictions on the exercise of Brazilian diplomacy. Under the terms of the authorization I received, I would have had the exclusive right to travel within a previously defined perimeter in New York during the United Nations General Assembly.

The immediate effect of the restrictions imposed on me is to prevent Brazil from fully participating in United Nations bodies based in the United States, while we hold the pro tempore presidency of Mercosur and BRICS, and chair the G20 Global Coalition for Local and Regional Production, Innovation and Equitable Access.

By making bilateral ministerial-level meetings with these countries, held outside the restricted quadrant, impossible, the measure interferes with the progress of discussions on shared agendas and projects.

The restriction imposed on me also compromises the pace of negotiations with international laboratories, hospital services, and research institutions seeking to invest in Brazil and that can strengthen our capacity to offer quality healthcare to Brazilians.

These agreements are essential to expanding and improving the care provided by the Unified Health System (SUS), which celebrates its 35th anniversary today. The greatest expression of Brazilian solidarity, it is a global example by guaranteeing free, universal, and comprehensive care care to 212 million people in a country of continental dimensions.

We will also be prevented from announcing another step in Brazil's collaboration with the PAHO Revolving Fund and Strategic Fund, which guarantee cheaper vaccines and oncology medications for the entire Americas, largely thanks to the purchasing power of our country, which has the SUS as the largest public market in the region.

In addition to these effects, this ban attempts to impose a partial exclusion of Brazil's rights, stripping us of the prerogatives guaranteed to Member States by the UN Headquarters Agreement.

Our response to this offense is: the Brazilian government will not renounce its sovereignty under any pretext, as the Brazilian people have already ratified, with their recent choices, their appreciation for democracy, vaccines, the Unified Health System (SUS), and the Mais Médicos program, which is being used as justification for the restrictions on my visa.

The alleged pretexts for this act are completely unsupported by either the facts or the legal framework governing relations between the countries, as they attempt to

fabricate unfounded accusations against the Mais Médicos program, created in 2013.

Decisions of this kind deserve condemnation, as they call into question the democratic experience of that country. Nevertheless, I insist that this is not the sole spirit of the American people and institutions.

During the Cold War, American society welcomed my father, a political exile under the Brazilian dictatorship, even though the dictatorship was, at the time, allied with Washington. Because of this exile, I was only able to meet him at the age of eight, along with my two brothers, both born in exile.

This spirit of American society, which champions development and humanism, has also given me a number of friends and fellow scientists and healthcare professionals, with whom I share the dream of a more egalitarian world in the provision of care that mitigates pain and seeks healing for all individuals, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, creed, or economic status.

I am certain that this spirit will not succumb to the shadow of obscurantism and denialism that currently looms over the country. A country that has gone from being a benchmark in providing development aid, global humanitarian cooperation, and the development of health technologies, to conditioning any cooperation on subservient adherence to the political agenda of the current rulers and their supporters.

In this dark moment, I reiterate the Brazilian Ministry of Health's unwavering commitment to promoting health, science, peace, and democracy in the Americas and around the world. We cannot condone any measures by the U.S. government to weaken PAHO and the World Health Organization (WHO).

ALEXANDRE ROCHA SANTOS PADILHA

Minister of Health of Brazil



Documento assinado eletronicamente por **Alexandre Rocha Santos Padilha, Ministro de Estado da Saúde**, em 19/09/2025, às 18:09, conforme horário oficial de Brasília, com fundamento no § 3º, do art. 4º, do [Decreto nº 10.543, de 13 de novembro de 2020](#); e art. 8º, da [Portaria nº 900 de 31 de Março de 2017](#).



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