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US Southern Command Commander Visits Brazil Before Leaving Office



Upon receiving the Medal of Victory from Brazilian Army General Laerte de Souza Santos (R), chairman of the Armed Forces Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. Navy Admiral Craig S. Faller (L) stressed that the decoration represents friendship and partnership between the United States and Brazil. (Photo: Brazilian Ministry of Defense)

By Anderson Gabino/Diálogo
 October 20, 2021

On a visit to Brazil, September 21-25, 2021, the last trip at the head of U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) before joining the reserves, U.S. Navy Admiral Craig S. Faller focused on military cooperation between the two countries, including agreements, joint exercises, and officer training.

In one of the meetings with Brazilian Armed Forces officers, which included Brazilian Army General Laerte de Souza Santos, chairman of the Armed Forces Joint Chiefs of Staff (EMCFA, in Portuguese) of the Ministry of Defense (MD, in Portuguese), the United States invited Brazil to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Adm. Faller mentioned that by joining NATO Brazil would have access to high-end armament technology and more joint training for its troops. "One of the challenges facing the U.S. military is to ensure that troops are trained and have equipment ready, which would be as beneficial to the United States, as it is to NATO and Brazil," he said.

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Brazil was designated a major non-NATO ally in July 2019, at the decision of then-U.S. President Donald Trump. This designation is granted by the U.S. government, not by the alliance. In South America, only Argentina and Brazil have the non-NATO ally status. Colombia, on the other hand, is the only de facto partner in the region.

Lectures, visits, and award

During his visit to EMCFA, Adm. Faller received the Medal of Victory from Gen. Laerte, a decoration from the MD to honor foreign military and civilians who have contributed to disseminating the achievements of former combatants during World War II.

"The progress we achieved working together will be the highlight of my military career. There is nothing more important than the hemisphere's two largest democracies standing together for the safety of future generations," Adm. Faller said.



Partnerships in the aerospace sector was among the topics discussed during Adm. Faller's (R) meeting with General Carlos de Almeida Baptista Júnior (L), commander of the Brazilian Air Force. (Photo: Brazilian Air Force)



The commander of Brazil's Peace Operations Joint Training Center, Brazilian Army Colonel Márcio Carneiro Barbosa (second from R), welcomed Adm. Faller and his delegation and presented the work carried out by the institution. (Photo: Anderson Gabino/Diálogo)

The meeting with General Carlos de Almeida Baptista Junior, Brazilian Air Force commander, addressed partnerships in the aerospace sector, as well as in multi-dimensional combined exercises involving both countries, such as Tápio, Red Flag, and Culminating, with the participation of aerospace, naval, surface, and cybernetic forces.

Adm. Faller also visited Brazil's Peace Operations Joint Training Center, where he was introduced to Brazil's fundamental training activities for troops participating in peacekeeping operations under the aegis of the United Nations, and spoke to Brazilian officials and leaders at the War College.

Finally, at the Brazilian Marine Corps General Command, he was received by General Jorge Armando Nery Soares and discussed the possibility of developing a combined strategy for the South Atlantic, with Brazil leading a Maritime Task Force and helping to contain threats in the region.

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