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Brazilian and US Armies Conduct Unprecedented Joint Military Exercise



The CORE 21/Southern Vanguard 22, conducted by a task force of the 5th Light Infantry Battalion, headquartered in Lorena (São Paulo state), has incorporated a Company of the 101st Airborne Division of U.S. Army South. (Photo: U.S. Army South)

By Marcos Ommati/Diálogo
 December 08, 2021

The Brazilian Southeastern Military Command and U.S. Army South have been conducting, December 6-16, 2021, a combined exercise called CORE 21 (Combined Operations and Rotation Exercise). In the United States this exercise is known as Southern Vanguard. The exercise is an Aero Mobile Operation (with the use of helicopters) and takes place in the cities of Lorena and Cachoeira Paulista, in São Paulo, and Resende, in Rio de Janeiro.

CORE 21 is the first combined exercise of its kind performed by U.S. troops in Latin America. The exercise is conducted by a task force of the 5th Light Infantry Battalion, based in Lorena (São Paulo state), having incorporated a Company of U.S. Army South's 101st Airborne Division. The participants are comprised of approximately 990 military personnel, 750 of which are Brazilians and 240 are from the United States.

"We have already done [this exercise] with troops from Argentina, as well as with troops from other South American countries, but it is the first time that it has occurred with American troops in Brazilian territory," Brazilian Army General Tomás Miguel Miné Ribeiro, commander of the Southeastern Military Command, said. "This is the result of a military training cooperation program that stipulated an annual combined exercise until 2028. This military program allows the interoperability of Brazilian and American troops, aiming for the development of Brazilian military doctrine, in addition to the interaction with a key partner for Brazil's National Defense Strategy and Brazilian foreign policy."

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History

The CORE exercises were conceived during the XXXVI Bilateral Conference of the Joint Staff in October 2020, in order to increase interoperability between the two armies. They are expected to occur every year until 2028. The first exercise was held in 2021, from January to March, in Fort Polk, Louisiana.

In recent decades, Brazil has gradually expanded international operations in various fields, including peacekeeping and security. Especially since participating in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH, in French), new opportunities for defense exchanges with several partner nations have emerged for the Brazilian military.

In this context, on April 12, 2010, a bilateral agreement on defense cooperation was signed in Washington, D.C. between the governments of Brazil and the United States. Since then, in a similar way to exercises conducted with other partner nations, there are military exercises authorized and accompanied by the Ministry of Defense, with the participation of the Brazilian and U.S. armed forces, annually.

CORE 21's combined training includes aero mobile assault, defensive shooting demonstrations, and fractional and integration shooting. "The soldiers standing before you today will undergo tough, realistic training scenarios and experience the exercise that has been presented by the planners," concluded Major General William L. Thigpen, commanding general of U.S. Army South.



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