



Rio de Janeiro State Governor and Bolsonaro Ally Calls for Brazil to “Open Its Own Guantanamo”

By [Reprieve](#)

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*Rio de Janeiro's state governor **Wilson Witzel** – an ally of Brazil's new **President Jair Bolsonaro** – is [reported to have said](#) that Brazil “needs its own Guantanamo”:*

Brazil “needs its own Guantanamo” to lock up criminals, Rio de Janeiro's state governor Wilson Witzel, an ally of new far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, said Thursday, referring to the US military base in Cuba used as an extraterritorial prison.

“We need to put terrorists in places where society is completely free of them,” Witzel said in a speech to police in the city of Rio.

The new governor, who took office this week as part of an electoral wave favoring far-right politicians that elevated Bolsonaro to the presidency, is given to making controversial statements.

For instance, just after being elected in October last year, he suggested **police snipers could kill armed “criminals”** — including anybody spotted carrying weapons, even if no-one was being threatened.

He and Bolsonaro have pledged to crack down on crime that is plaguing Brazil. The country in 2017 recorded nearly 64,000 murders.

With his Guantanamo comment, Witzel was referring to a US military base leased from Cuba where suspects from America's “war on terror” launched after the attacks of September 11, 2001 are kept in a sort of detention limbo, without access to the US legal system.” (AFP)

Commenting, **Maya Foa**, Director of Reprieve, which represents men held in Guantanamo, said:

“Since it opened in 2002, Guantanamo has become a byword for injustice and gross violations of human rights. Nearly 17 years on, the US is still detaining forty men at the prison, having subjected them to prolonged torture. 31 of the men do not face charges and have no chance of a trial. The world is certainly not safer as a result of these injustices. It is shocking that President Bolsonaro's allies are calling for Brazil to open its own version of this hell hole, and shows what toxic influence Guantanamo continues to have in the world. President Trump must close the prison at once.”

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