

Bolsonaro leaves PSL to create own far-right political party



Brasilia, November 21 (RHC)-- Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro announced that he is leaving the Social Liberal Party (PSL) that brought him to power, and that he will create a new conservative political formation that will bear the name of Alliance For Brazil (APB).

With the announcement, Bolsonaro has set a new precedent in his already criticized behavior by creating his own political party with the intention of nominating allies for next year's municipal elections.

"Today I announce my departure from the PSL and the creation of a new party: The Alliance for Brazil. I thank all those who collaborated with me in the PSL and who were partners in the 2018 elections," the Brazilian head of state tweeted.

The right-wing PSL organization currently has 53 representatives and three senators. However, Bolsonaro's political team, composed mainly of his two sons, Congressman Eduardo Bolsonaro and Senator Flavio Bolsonaro, believes they can bring 27 of those congressmen to the APB.

The fissure would represent a hard blow for the PSL, but it was also expected given the constant conflicts between the party's authorities and Bolsonaro's team.

Bolsonaro's differences with PSL authorities began during the October election campaign when PSL head Luciano Bivar allowed the current president's group to take the reins of the organization through lawyer Gustavo Bebianno, who in January would become secretary-general of the presidency.

Shortly after, in February, Bebianno had to resign when it was revealed that the campaign had used "façade candidatures" to obtain public funding. Already in recent months, intrigues and clashes within the PSL sharpened amid bids for the management of the nearly US\$180 million intended for the party and electoral fund until 2022.

Finally, last month, Bolsonaro tried to push Bivar aside, but he had to settle for putting his son Eduardo as the leader of the PSL bench in the lower house. Bivar considered it a "coup" attempt and promised measures against the lawmakers who supported the appointment of the young Bolsonaro.

Seeing as impossible to separate Bivar, and evaluating a difficult scenario that could risk any strategy for the 2020 municipal elections, the president decided to abandon PSL and launch his new party.

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