

Brazilian court suspends purchase of 98 Italian armored vehicles

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A Centauro II armoured vehicle. | Photo: Twitter/ @sessaonoticias

Brasilia, December 6 (RHC)-- Less than a month before its departure from power, the Bolsonaro administration wanted to consolidate an arms purchase while leaving a budget with cuts for health and education. Wilson Alves de Souza, judge of the Federal Regional Court of the First Region, provisionally suspended the tender through which the Brazilian army intended to acquire 98 Centauro II armored vehicles for US \$946 million.

The judge argued that the purchase of war equipment is not a priority for a country that is not at war or has imminent threats to its national security. His sentence suspends the tender that the administration of President Jair Bolsonaro began in March 2021.

In November 2021, the Italian consortium Iveco-Oto Melara (CIO) was announced as the winner of a contract that provides for the acquisition of the armored vehicles. This operation was justified by arguing that it would be the first batch of a purchase of 221 armored vehicles to modernize the Brazilian fleet until

2037. The auction, however, has been strongly criticized at a time when Bolsonaro cut the budget federal for education and health.

The tweet reads: "Without amnesty or forgiveness, Bolsonaro goes to prison. Destruction of the environment, education, health, science and technology. Unrestricted release of pesticides. Facilitation of carrying weapons. Corruption and kidnapping of institutions. Genocide."

The purchase of armored vehicles is "an immorality given the current chaotic situation of public accounts," said lawmaker Gleisi Hoffmann, who is president of the Workers' Party and a member of the transition team formed by Brazilian President-elect Lula da Silva.

"The denounced act does not meet the requirements of expediency and opportunity, since it is evident the lack of reasoning, the deviation of the purpose, the illegality, and even the lack of a minimum of common sense," said Judge Alves de Souza. "It could not be given another classification when simultaneously cuts are made in the budgets for education and health due to lack of money," he added.

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