

## Evo Morales attacks 'white supremacist ideology' in clash with Bolsonaro ally

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The Guardian, Mon 7 Jan 2019 17.13 GMT

- **Bolivia's president stands up for indigenous rights**
- **Feud with Rodrigo Amorim reveals new political battleground**

Bolivia's leftist president [Evo Morales](#) has clashed with an ally of Brazil's new far-right leader [Jair Bolsonaro](#), highlighting the new ideological battlegrounds forming across Latin America as its leftist "pink tide" is consumed by a conservative counter-current.

Rodrigo Amorim, a recently elected congressman for Bolsonaro's Social Liberal party, belittled [an urban indigenous community](#) that occupied a disused indigenous museum in northern Rio de Janeiro.

"If you like Indians, you should go to Bolivia – as well as being communist, it's governed by an Indian," Amorim told the Rio newspaper O Globo [in an interview](#) published on Friday.

Morales, who was elected Bolivia's first indigenous president in 2005, hit back. "We regret the reemergence of white supremacist (KKK) ideology" in the region, [he tweeted](#), calling such thinking a reflex of the xenophobia of Donald Trump's administration.

"Faced with intolerance and discrimination, indigenous peoples will promote respect and integration. We all have the same rights because we are children of the same Mother Earth," Morales added.

Bolsonaro, a self-styled anti-leftist crusader [famed for his hostility towards minorities](#), has also faced accusations of racism towards Brazil's black and indigenous communities. In interviews and on the campaign trail Bolsonaro has repeatedly compared indigenous tribespeople [to animals living in zoos](#).

But Morales – one of the few survivors of the "pink tide" generation of Latin American leaders that also included Bolsonaro's leftwing nemesis Lula – was careful to direct his fire at Amorim, not Brazil's new far-right leader.

Despite their huge ideological differences, Morales attended Bolsonaro's 1 January inauguration – a consequence, experts say, of Bolivia's economic reliance on its neighbour. Bolivia exports around half of its natural gas to Brazil and the countries' long-standing supply contract [will expire later this year](#), meaning Morales is reluctant to cross Bolsonaro, whatever his personal feelings.

Morales struck a diplomatic tone after travelling to Brasilia to watch Bolsonaro take office, arguing the two men had “a duty to work together for the benefit of our countries”.

“Bolivia and Brazil are neighbors for life,” [Morales tweeted](#) alongside a video showing him clutching Bolsonaro’s hand with both hands.

Bolsonaro – who has outraged activists by signalling he will move [to open up Brazil’s indigenous reserves](#) to development – has repeatedly name-checked Morales in order to justify his controversial plans for such communities.

“In Bolivia, right here next door to Brazil, we’ve got an Indian who is president,” he said in [a webcast to followers](#) shortly before taking power. “So why do Indians in Brazil have to be treated like prehistoric men?”

He added: “I’ve talked to the Indians. What do the Indians want? The great majority of the ones I’ve spoken to: they want electricity, they want internet, they want doctors, dentists ... they want to play football, they want cars, they want to go the cinema, to go to the theatre. They are human beings just like us.”