

US spied on presidents of Brazil, Mexico, documents from Snowden reveal

Tom Eley
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The US National Security Agency eavesdropped on the communications of the presidents of Brazil and Mexico, according to documents gathered by whistleblower Edward Snowden and revealed by journalist Glenn Greenwald to the Brazilian television news program *Fantastico*.

The news program displayed a slide from the NSA with passages written by Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto from June 2012, when he was a candidate for the presidency. The excerpts show Nieto discussing what ministers he might select should he win election. They make clear the NSA was reading Nieto's e-mails.

A second slide showed an NSA analysis of internal communication patterns between Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff and leading advisers. The NSA also used a program to follow all internet content that Rousseff accessed, and deployed another that would have allowed them to read her e-mails.

Both slides were part of internal NSA demonstrations of the efficacy and potential of their spying programs and technologies.

"It was very clear in the documents that they had already carried out the spying," Greenwald, speaking Portuguese, said of the Brazil revelations on *Fantastico*. "They aren't talking about something they are planning, they are celebrating their spying successes."

The new revelations follow the July release of documents showing that Brazil and all of Latin America are subject to a massive NSA spying program targeting all forms of telecommunications. The NSA has harvested billions of communications in Brazil alone (see: "NSA casts massive surveillance net over Latin America").

In response to the publication of the new documents, Rousseff on Monday summoned US Ambassador

Thomas Shannon for an explanation and called a top-level cabinet meeting that included the ministers of defense, justice, communications and foreign affairs "to discuss the espionage report," according to the Associated Press.

The revelations "should be considered very serious and constitute a clear violation of Brazilian sovereignty," said Justice Minister Jose Eduardo Cardozo. "This [spying] hits not only Brazil, but the sovereignty of several countries that could have been violated in a way totally contrary to what international law establishes."

"If it's confirmed it is very serious because a country cannot passively accept the violation of its sovereignty," he said. "Any country that has its sovereignty violated has to react, take a position and use international law to put things in their place. And that's what Brazil will do."

Cardozo acknowledged the new documents show that the NSA spying is about more than combating terrorism—the constant refrain from the Obama administration—and had political targets and may have even gone as far as commercial espionage. Another Brazilian government official said that the revelations may lead Brazil to scrap plans for the purchase of 36 F-18 fighter jets from US manufacturer Boeing, a deal estimated at about \$4 billion.

"I feel a mixture of amazement and indignation," said Senator Ricardo Ferraco, chair of the Brazilian Senate's foreign relations committee. "It seems like there are no limits. When the phone of the president of the republic is monitored, it's hard to imagine what else might be happening. It's unacceptable that in a country like ours, where there is absolutely no climate of terrorism, that there is this type of spying."

There was no official comment from Mexico, but in

July Nieto declared that it would be “totally unacceptable” for the US to have engaged in espionage against Mexico.

There has been no comment from the Obama administration.

It is noteworthy that when Edward Snowden was stranded at the international section of the Moscow airport seeking refuge from the persecution of the American state, both Brazil and Mexico ruled out granting him asylum.



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