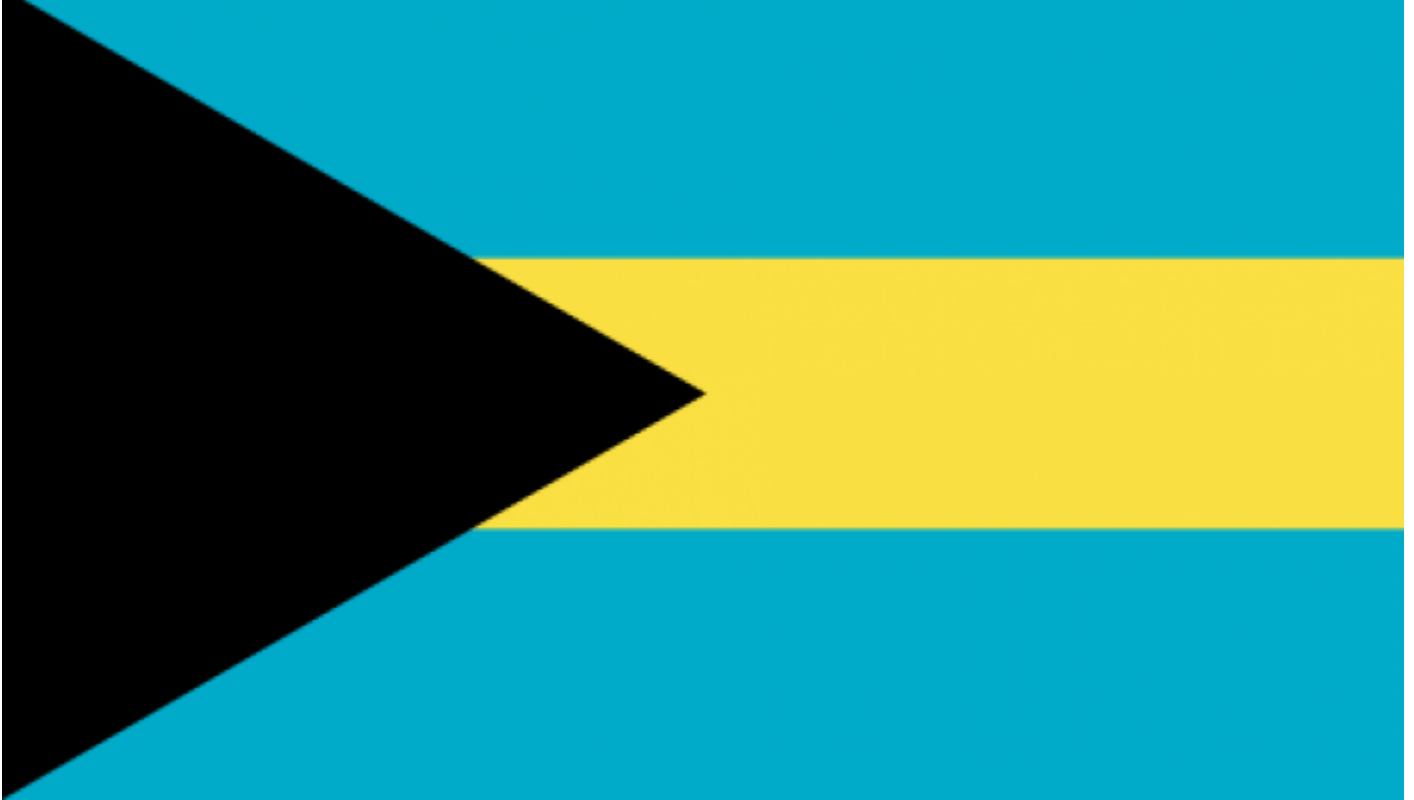


Bahamas to Take U.S. Spying Claims to OAS



Nassau, June 4 (Caribbeannews-RHC) -- A Bahamas foreign service team will travel to Paraguay this week to address the Organization of American States (OAS) on the controversial allegations that the National Security Agency (NSA) of the United States is recording and storing audio from every cell phone conversation in The Bahamas.

The team is also expected to meet with a representative from the office of the U.S. assistant secretary of state on the sideline of the OAS summit.

During a press conference, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fred Mitchell, said that it has been more than a week since U.S. officials indicated they would give a public response on the matter.

No such response has yet come, according to Mitchell, who said his ministry is “kicking it up to an even higher level to get answers.” Mitchell said whatever the outcome of the matter is, the government will stand up for the rule of law, for the protection of the privacy of Bahamians, and will hold all The Bahamas’ international partners to their own moral standards.

When asked if there is any evidence to suggest the Bahamas Telecommunications Company (BTC) was used to facilitate the recordings, Mitchell said there are many “straws in the wind at the moment, but no

hard facts.”

The company has said neither the Bahamas Telecommunications Company nor its parent company Cable and Wireless Communications (CWC) is “complicit” in any breach of customer information.

As has been widely reported, the documents state that the NSA is recording and archiving every cell phone conversation in The Bahamas for up to 30 days.

Mitchell said he will provide an update on the matter during his contribution to the budget debate sometime next week.

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