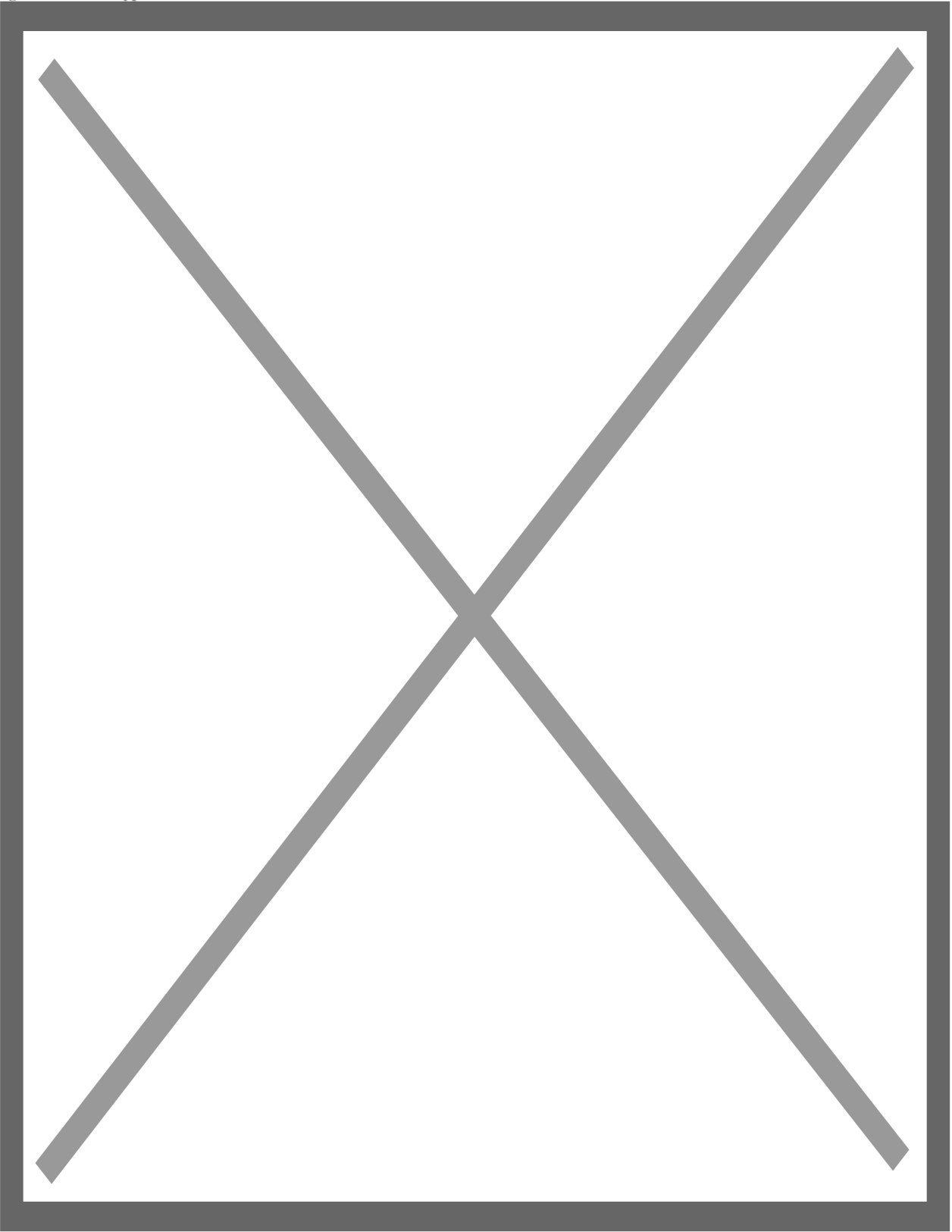


*Spanish company that spied on
Assange informed CIA about
meetings held by Latin American
leaders*

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Hidden cameras at Ecuadorian Embassy in London to spy on Julian Assange

Madrid, July 18 (RHC)-- David Morales, owner of the Spanish security company UC Global, S.L., which spied on Julian Assange during the Wikileaks founder's time at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, also allegedly spied for the CIA on meetings held in 2018 by the former president of Ecuador, Rafael Correa (2007-2017), with former presidents of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay - Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Dilma Rousseff and José Mujica - according to a new examination of his MacBook laptop ordered by Spanish Judge Santiago Pedraz, who has been investigating Morales for three years.

The ex-military officer had been hired by the Correa government to handle security at the Ecuadorian Embassy, where Assange was taking refuge. Morales ordered his workers to spy on Assange's meetings with his lawyers, but he also did the same to Correa, especially after he left office, to pass information to his successor and political adversary, Lenín Moreno.

Police omitted folder called 'CIA' from the computer of Spaniard who allegedly spied on Julian Assange. Sofía and Anne, Correa's daughters, twice had Trojans (viruses disguised as legitimate software) from the company Tradeseegur installed on their cell phones - two iPhone 5s delivered by the Spanish company in 2014 - when their father was president. The Trojans allowed full control of their messages and conversations while the young women were studying in France.

According to the new analysis of Morales' laptop, seized by police after his arrest in 2019, the name "CIA" appears several times on an external hard disk on which he filed the projects and operations in which UC Global participated. According to the documentation, to which EL PAÍS has had access, Correa and his press chief Amauri Chamorro Venegas were accompanied by UC Global employees acting as bodyguards on a trip between March 18 and 24, 2018, who recorded details of the former president's meetings. Ecuador's Presidential Protection Service was obliged to provide security coverage for former presidents and hired the services of the Spanish company, which had already worked for their embassy in the British capital.

The judicial investigation has discovered that, in addition to the reports written about the 2018 trip, Morales wrote others in English concerning Correa's private meetings at his home in Brussels, where he settled after leaving the presidency. Correa ended his relationship with UC Global in May 2019, when one of his bodyguards told him Morales had asked them to draft reports on his meetings and his personal and political activities.

When asked by Assange's lawyers why this and other emails were written in English, the former Marine told the court he was trying to "improve the English of his employees." Among the material seized at the headquarters of UC Global are videos of the former Ecuadorian president during meetings with third parties.

The judicial investigation suggests that Morales hedged his bets and offered the information to the highest bidder. The new findings show that among his clients was the government of Lenín Moreno (2017-2021), Correa's successor.

When Moreno's government cancelled his security contract for the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, where Assange resided, Morales felt betrayed and confessed to the manager of UC Global in Ecuador that he had been handing over Correa's private information to his political enemy. Correa has filed a lawsuit against Morales in the Spanish High Court.

Intimate images involving a member of the diplomatic mission stationed at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London have also appeared among the new evidence, on a flash drive hidden in a safe at the company's

headquarters in Jerez de la Frontera, southern Spain. Despite its incriminating importance, these images were not among the material handed over by the police to Judge Pedraz during the first search of Morales' devices.

One of the three protected witnesses who have testified in Assange's complaint against Morales provided the judge with a report including intimate photographs of the diplomat. The photographs were taken from a private hard drive belonging to the diplomat, which was copied by a UC Global employee. The intimate material was delivered by Morales in Quito to Bolívar Garcés, director of Senain, Ecuador's now-defunct national intelligence service, when he was informed that his security contract at the London embassy was going to be terminated. WhatsApp conversations between Morales and his employees suggest he intended to use the photographs as blackmail in order not to lose the contract, which was awarded to an Ecuadorian company. "I want to use the images to post them. By the way [...] do you have the report that was made of her [...] I think you destroyed it, no?" he states in one message. Morales has justified having the images in his possession to a chance finding during a "security analysis" of the diplomat's computer and said that when he saw the content, he decided to tell Garcés.

The diplomat who appears in the images has sued Morales and declared that the material was on a hard drive he left in his office at the embassy and that he had erased it. "I deleted it many, many years ago. It was on an external disk; I had it at home. I moved the disk to my office at the embassy for a couple of days because I had to record some things," the victim said. In his judicial statement, the complainant said he was informed of the emergence of the material by Garcés, who said that Morales tried to extort him. This alleged extortion attempt was made "not only to Colonel Garcés, but also to the general who was in charge of Senain, other officials, and the vice minister of Foreign Affairs in my ministry," the victim claims.

The new data dump taken from Morales' laptop has provided fresh clues about the alleged delivery of the recordings between Assange and his lawyers during his stay at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to the CIA. In December 2017, Morales sent an email to his employees from The Venetian hotel in Las Vegas in which he said he had been given instructions to schedule the streaming of the audios and videos that were recording the Wikileaks founder. He told them that it should be programmed in such a way that Ecuadorians "only see what we are interested in [...] and not who has more connections or who is connected to the system." The instructions in English to create a second user to access the cameras were discovered in a PowerPoint file attached to that email.

The new search of Morales' company logs was made at the request of Assange's defense and by order of Judge Pedraz. According to Assange's experts, the difference in the size or volume of the two copies - the original taken by police from Morales' computers, pen drives and electronic devices - and the latest one represents 213.1 GB: 551,616 files and 973 mail files. The police claim that in their initial search they used an automatic program that extracts the types of files they requested.

(Source: El Pais / Madrid *** July 18, 2023)

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/328799-spanish-company-that-spied-on-assange-informed-cia-about-meetings-held-by-latin-american-leaders>



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