

Rapporteur Recommends Sending Brazilian President to Trial



Brasilia, July 12 (RHC)-- Brazilian rapporteur Sergio Zveiter has asked a Committee of Brazil's Lower House to accept the corruption charges against Michel Temer and move towards a trial.

The rapporteur for the corruption case against the Brazilian president, Michel Temer, says there is sufficient evidence to warrant confirming the charges and proceeding to a trial. If that happens, President Temer will have to step aside for up to 180 days, until a verdict is reached.

Sergio Zveiter made his initial presentation of the case to the Constitution and Justice Committee, or CCJ, of Brazil's Lower House of Congress. The CCJ is expected to make a recommendation on the charges against Temer later this week. The full House must then vote in favor by two-thirds before the Supreme Court can open a trial.

There were angry scenes just before the CCJ's opening session, as some of the political parties supporting the government changed their members on the committee, fearing they might not vote in favor of Temer. One of the lawmakers who was removed, Delegado Waldir, shouted: "Cowards! This government is a bunch of bandits!"

Brazil's Attorney General Rodrigo Janot requested last month that charges of corruption be brought against President Temer. A few days earlier the Federal Police had confirmed the authenticity of an audio recording made in March as part of a plea bargain.

In the recorded conversation with Joesley Batista, the head of the JBS meatpacking firm, President Temer was heard apparently approving the payment of bribes to Eduardo Cunha, the imprisoned former speaker of Congress, to ensure his silence over the involvement of other government figures in a series of corruption scandals.

President Temer's popularity has plummeted to three percent or less as the corruption accusations against him and other politicians deepen.

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