

Former Brazilian President Michel Temer arrested over corruption



Brasilia, March 22 (RHC)-- In Brazil, a task force for the Lavo Jato corruption case has arrested Michel Temer, the former president of Brazil. Agents also have a warrant out for former Minister of Energy and Mining Moreira Franco.

Brazilian Federal Police arrested former President Michel Temer Thursday in a case linked to Lava Jato, or the "Car Wash" anti-corruption probe -- the largest operation to combat corruption in Brazil's history which uncovered a gigantic deviation scandal of the state oil company Petrobras.

Temer's arrest was ordered by the federal judge of Rio de Janeiro, Marcelo Bretas, who also requested the arrest of former minister Moreington Franco Moreira Franco, an important collaborator of the former president and his colleague in the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB) party.

The Office of the Prosecutor requested the opening of corruption trials against Temer twice before the Supreme Court, but the Congress refused to authorize the proceedings. In October last year, police officials said there were strong implications indicating Temer may have been receiving bribes via the MDB party and abusing his authority to favor certain port administration companies.

The report also implicated his daughter, Maristela, as well as 11 others including Colonel Joao Baptista Lima and his wife Maria Rita Fratezi. The document suggests the president may also have been receiving bribes through the number of real estate reforms like those conducted in his daughter's house, O Globo said.

The full report was filed in Brazil's Supreme Court, which recommended the "blocking of assets" of all those under suspicion as well as holding four in preventative detention. However, the Federal Supreme Court (STF) said that it will await the Public Prosecutor's decision before conducting any arrests or blocking funds.

Temer took office in 2016 in a Senate-imposed mandate after his right-wing party, which had the majority in the Brazilian upper chamber, ousted leftist President Dilma Rousseff over unproven claims of corruption related to irregular allocation of public funds. Temer was serving as Dilma's vice president as part of a coalition between the Workers' Party and the MDB.

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