

New Investigation Shows France Intercepts International Communications



DGSE

DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DE LA SÉCURITÉ EXTÉRIEURE

Paris, July 3 (RHC)-- France's external intelligence agency has been intercepting international communications for the past several years, a new investigation reveals. The findings of a weeks-long investigation carried out by the French daily *Le Nouvel Observateur*, show that France's Directorate-General for External Security, known by its French acronym DGSE, has been spying on the international communications via a secret network of submarine cables linking Europe to the rest of the world.

According to the newspaper, in 2008, France's then President Nicolas Sarkozy authorized DGSE to launch a comprehensive espionage on global communications transmitted through the cables.

About \$700 million was earmarked by the secret service for the "Top Secret" plan over five years, from 2008 to 2013, to install interception stations where the cables end in France, particularly in the cities of Marseille, Penmarch Saint-Valéry-en-Caux, the probe by the daily further said.

At least five major cables, routed to the United States, Southeast Asia, East Africa, and India, were tapped during this period with the help of the operator Orange and Alcatel-Lucent group, *Le Nouvel Observateur* added.

The newspaper also said that President Francois Hollande has authorized the DGSE to extend its espionage operations and increase the cable stations in a new five-year plan, from 2014 to 2019.

The article added that there has been an intense cooperation between DGSE and the UK's intelligence agency GCHQ following a secret 2010 accord on cooperation between Sarkozy and British Prime Minister David Cameron.

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