

Dilma Rousseff Says Temer is 'Illegitimate'



Brasilia, December 19 (RHC)-- In an interview broadcast by Al Jazeera, the ousted democratically elected President of Brazil, Dilma Rousseff, called acting President Michel Temer 'illegitimate,' and the process of her impeachment 'a coup.'

"[Temer] is obviously an illegitimate president of Brazil. That's because the process which brought him to government... is a process based on tearing up the Brazilian constitution," she said. "The parliament allied itself with segments of the judiciary system and launched a coup, removing a president from office with completely unsubstantiated allegations," she said. And she added that the main driver of her impeachment was a desire to end the corruption investigations she had launched.

Rousseff was impeached in August on an obscure allegation that she had inflated projected budget numbers. Since coming to power, the government of Michel Temer has been beset by a wave of corruption allegations with seven members of his all-male cabinet resigning, and evidence emerging that Temer himself accepted a \$3 million bribe.

Dilma Rousseff said: "I believe that the key component in the ongoing struggle in Brazil today is a return of free elections for president. We must elect a new president of the Republic so that this coup is effectively blocked."

In referring to her former Vice-President, Michel Temer, who led the impeachment campaign, she said: "I never expected him to be a traitor and he is a traitor. He didn't betray me as a person. He betrayed the President of Brazil. He betrayed an institution."

A recent poll showed that only 13 percent of Brazilians approve of Temer, while almost half say his government is "terrible." Rousseff's Workers Party, which came to power under former President Lula da Silva, is credited with bringing almost 26 million Brazilians out of poverty and re-energizing the economy.

Elections are not scheduled until 2018, but it is widely expected that Lula da Silva will run again and win handily.

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