

CIA Halts Spying on Some Allies in Europe



Washington, September 22 (RHC)-- The Central Intelligence Agency has temporarily curbed its spying programs on some allies in Europe, according to an unnamed American official. The pause in decades of espionage, which still remains in partial effect, was designed to give CIA officers time to assess whether spying on friendly governments is worth the risk of being exposed, said the source who has been briefed on the situation.

The anonymous source also claimed that the agency wants to evaluate its officers to see if they are competent enough. The stand-down order, now in effect for about two months, forbids agents in Europe from undertaking "unilateral operations," such as meeting with sources they have recruited within allied governments, the Associated Press reported.

The officers are, however, allowed to meet with counterparts from the host countries and perform joint intelligence operations with them. James Clapper, the U.S. director of national intelligence, may have indirectly confirmed the news during a recent public event. He said the U.S. is taking more risk

now because it has stopped gathering information on "specific targets."

There is growing anger at the United States for spying on U.S. citizens and ordinary citizens of other countries across the world. The scandal came in the wake of Edward Snowden's revelations of classified National Security Agency information in 2013.

Snowden revealed that German Chancellor Angela Merkel's phone calls had been monitored by NSA since 2002. Merkel was infuriated by the revelation and demanded explanation from U.S. officials.

A scandal in which a German national was caught selling secrets to the U.S., further increased tensions between the two countries. Germany expelled the Berlin CIA chief following the incident.



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