

# *Brazil's Coup President Michel Temer Pushes Privatization Plan*

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Brasilia, May 25 (RHC)-- Brazil's unelected coup President Michel Temer has started to push ahead with neo-liberal economic reforms as scandal rocks his government, announcing on Tuesday a neo-liberal program aimed at reducing the country's debt and -- in his words -- "sparking economic growth."

Temer announced that he plans to seek approval for a constitutional amendment that would allow for the government to slash public spending and cap expenditure increases before paying debts. The Congress is set to vote on the proposed revision of fiscal targets Tuesday, O Globo reported.

Without delving into details, Temer gestured toward increased privatization, a move that the right-wing opposition has long pushed for while the progressive governments of suspended President Dilma Rousseff and her predecessor Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva expanded social programs after more than a decade in office.

Temer also alluded to plans to shake up the state oil company Petrobras, which likely means a move to privatization. According to WikiLeaks cables, Temer's acting Foreign Minister Jose Serra made promises to foreign extractive companies like Chevron in 2009 that it would be easy to push for legislative changes to open up offshore exploration and drilling to multinational oil corporations.

Temer rejected claims that there has been a break with the constitutional order in Brazil with the decision to remove suspended President Dilma Rousseff from office. Shocking leaked recordings revealed on Monday that a key member of Temer's inner circle conspired with the Supreme Court and military commanders in the plot to oust the president.

He also said that his government has no obligation to respond to street protests that have erupted against his unelected rise to power, painting himself and his allies as victims of "psychological aggressions" and accusing protesters of not having a coherent set of demands.

Former President Lula da Silva, whose voter support for the 2018 election soars above Temer's in recent polls by some 20 percent, has slammed Temer and his cabinet for acting as a permanent rather than interim government.

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