
Brazilian Judge Rejects "for Now" Complaint Against Greenwald

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A Brazilian judge rejected "for now" the Federal Public Ministry complaint against the founder of The Intercept Brasil, Glenn Greenwald. This ruling temporarily saves the journalist from being prosecuted for his "supposed role" in the release of hacked cellphone messages that have embarrassed prosecutors and prominent officials in the country.

The judge, Ricardo Soares Leite, said the Supreme Court had to rule first on an earlier injunction shielding Greenwald from the investigation before he could decide on the indictment. This injunction charges Greenwald, a renowned Pulitzer Award-winning journalist, with allegedly abetting the hacking as it published leaked information.

"I decline, for now, to receive the complaint against Glenn Greenwald, due to the controversy over the extent of the injunction granted by judge Gilmar Mendes," the judge wrote.

In August last year, the Brazilian judge Gilmar Mendes forbade "public authorities and their administrative or criminal investigative bodies" from "performing acts aimed at holding Glenn" accountable for receiving, obtaining, or transmitting information published in media outlets, under protection constitutional secrecy of the journalistic source."

On Twitter, the journalist described the judge's decision as "good news," but insufficient, and announced that he would appeal to the Brazilian Supreme Court in his fight "for freedom of the press."

"The decision protects me from the processes. But my goal is not just to protect myself (if I were, I would leave the country). Our fight is for a free press for all journalists who remain threatened by this decision. We will go to the STF (Brazilian Supreme Court) for a more decisive guarantee of press freedom," he wrote.

With the judge's decision, Glenn temporarily escapes prosecution on the case, since Brazilian justice tied to the government of the far-right president Jair Bolsonaro, will not rest on its attempt to prosecute him.

The journalist has repeatedly denounced that the accusation against him is "an obvious attempt to attack the free press in retaliation for the revelations we reported about Minister Moro and the Bolsonaro government."

However, the founder of the sites The Intercept and The Intercept Brasil was charged on Jan. 21 by a federal prosecutor for hacking a computing device, illegal interception of communications and criminal association.

The case is part of the 'Vaza-Jato' series of reports, which revealed conversations between then-federal judge Sergio Moro, now Minister of Justice, prosecutor Deltan Dallagnol, who leads the task force of Operation Lava-Jato and other members of the team. They were responsible for the investigation that arrested several politicians and business people for corruption.

The conversations they also revealed how Moro was advising prosecutors in the graft case against former leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who was jailed without any substantial evidence, for corruption but released 18 months later.

Greenwald, a resident of Brazil and fierce critic of far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, is best known for his work on the disclosures of Edward Snowden, the American former National Security Agency contractor who leaked secret documents about U.S. telephone and internet surveillance in 2013.
