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CIA-run agency recruited Ecuadorian police, military to spy for US – report

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The documents cited by the pan-Latin American TV channel [allege](#) that in 2008 Lebanese national Leila Hadad Perez, holding fake Ecuadorian citizenship, established a recruitment agency that was run by the CIA.

Known among the intelligence world by her code name 'Agent Swat', Hadad allegedly exercised great influence over local law enforcement and military using anti-drug operations as a pretext.

The documents, however, show that the project only lasted until 2009, when the US military base in Manta was closed, thanks to President Rafael Correa, who took office in 2007.

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The agency then lost interest in Ecuador and opted not to renew efforts at destabilizing the government, according to the media report.

However, that is when NGOs, media and opposition groups allegedly came into play. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) was particularly prominent, spending millions of dollars on various projects and employing local politicians and community leaders, according to the teleSUR investigation.

The agency also broadcast audio and video materials allegedly proving the link between the agency and several politicians, including Ecuador's former director of intelligence, Mario Pazmino. Hadad Perez's name was on the list for relaying US orders to local agents of influence.

The promotion of human rights, democracy and freedom of speech reportedly also formed the core of such work, carried out through digital media campaigns.

Several days prior to the latest reports, teleSUR claimed that US agencies were directing attacks against the progressive government in Ecuador. Correa commented on the CIA's involvement in a press conference, calling

the revelations “powerful.”

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The leader confirmed he was in possession of evidence that US intelligence was employing multiple sectors, including politicians, media and law enforcement with the aim of destabilizing the government.

*“The National Endowment for Democracy is the CIA’s financial branch—like in Venezuela, in Bolivia—it does not fund the Red Cross anymore, it funds groups providing training on democracy, this means destabilizing the government and other opposition movements,”* Correa said, adding that the CIA’s involvement with opposition groups was already well known, along with the funding chain and the strategies they would use to implement said changes. These reportedly included social networks and web pages, as well as alleged political analysts and researchers stoking up controversy.

President Correa has already been the target of a coup attempt by his country’s military in 2010.