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**Objet:** Declassified Diplomacy with Brazil: National Security Archive Hails Obama Administration  
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Declassified Diplomacy with Brazil:  
National Security Archive Hails Obama Administration  
Decision to Assist Brazilian Truth Commission

Washington, D.C., June 20, 2014 -- The Obama administration advanced the principle of international openness, accountability and support for human rights this week when Vice President Joe Biden transferred to Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff a set of newly declassified U.S. government documents relating to Brazil's military dictatorship, which held power from 1964 - 1985.

Visiting Brazil for the World Cup soccer competition, Biden announced that the Administration would conduct a further review and release of still secret U.S. records to help to the Brazilian Truth Commission; the commission is investigating human rights abuses under military rule and due to issue its final report at the end of 2014. The documentation, Biden stated, would be "of particular interest" to President Rousseff who was a political prisoner and torture victim herself during the military regime. (Diario do Podar, June 17, 2014) "I hope that in taking steps to come to grips with our past we can find a way to focus on the immense promise of the future," Reuters quoted Biden as saying. (Reuters, June 17, 2014)

Biden's announcement comes as the U.S. and Brazil are attempting to mend fences in the aftermath of revelations that the National Security Agency had tapped President Rousseff's cell phone and spied on other Brazilian government agencies.

Peter Kornbluh, who directs the Archive's Brazil project, commended the Obama administration for the document donation, and hailed the Vice President's "virtuous use of declassified diplomacy." According to Kornbluh, "Biden's diplomatic gesture will not only assist the Truth Commission in shedding light on the dark past of Brazil's military era, but also create a foundation for a better and more transparent future in U.S.-Brazilian relations."

The United States covertly supported the military coup that deposed President Joao Goulart on April 1, 1964, and maintained close ties to Brazil's military rulers during the dictatorship. American diplomats, intelligence operatives and military personnel reported routinely, and in detail, about regime policies -- and abuses. The Archive has obtained the release of portions of this critically important historical record through the Freedom of Information Act, and has posted a number of files relating to the U.S. role in the 1964 coup that brought the dictatorship to power.

Since the inauguration of the Brazilian Truth Commission in May 2012, the Archive's Brazil project has been pressing the Obama Administration to conduct a special declassification to assist the Commission's investigation. With the encouragement of the National Security Archive and others, in recent years U.S. presidents have shared similar records with other governments seeking to recapture their troubled pasts, including in Chile, Guatemala and Ecuador.

Rousseff's government has been an active proponent of freedom of information. Brazil served as co-chair of the Obama-led Open Government Partnership. In 2012, the country implemented a new information access law, taking a further step out of the persistent shadow of two decades of military rule.

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