



If Not Stopped, PRISM Spying "May Lead to the End of the Rule of Law"

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On Thursday, the Paris-based International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), one of the world's oldest human rights organizations, comprising 164 member organizations in more than 100 countries, filed a complaint with the Public Prosecutor of the Tribunal de Grande Instance of Paris, seeking an investigation into whether the U.S. National Security Agency violated French privacy laws. The complaint against "persons unknown" is based on facts revealed by NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden which exposed the PRISM program collecting data from servers of various Internet service providers (Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Paltalk, Facebook, YouTube, Skype, AOL and Apple).

Acting on the grounds of their organization's mandate, which includes the fight against infringements on personal liberties through automated data processing, and on the grounds of their personal harm, the FIDH has filed this complaint on the basis of articles 323-1, 226-18, 226-1 and 226-2 of the French Criminal Code, referring to fraudulent access to an automated data processing system, collection of personal data by fraudulent means, willful violation of the intimacy of private life, and the use and conservation of recordings and documents obtained through such means.

"Under the guise of combatting terrorism and organized crime this blatant intrusion into individuals' lives represents a serious threat to individual liberties and, if not stopped, may lead to the end of the rule of law," writes the FIDH in its communiqué. The FIDH doesn't exclude filing a similar complaint against the French Foreign Secret Service (DGSE) accused of similar spying practices.

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