

Brazil Coup Plotter Eduardo Cunha Impeached in Lower House

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Global Research, September 13, 2016

[TeleSUR](#) 12 September 2016

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

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Former president of the chamber of deputies and mastermind of President Dilma Rousseff's impeachment, Eduardo Cunha, lost his seat in the lower house Monday night that had so far given him immunity against judicial proceedings over corruption charges.

Representatives voted overwhelmingly in favor of his removal with 450 votes for impeachment, nine abstentions and 10 votes against, when the approval required only 257 deputies, with a minimum of 420 attending the vote.

At the end of the vote, Cunha left the assembly surrounded with guards while opposition representatives chanted "Cunha Out!"

Cunha has been investigated for lying about hiding over US\$5 million in laundered money in secret Swiss bank accounts. He denied having money offshore, but accounts tied to him were [repeatedly confirmed by Swiss officials](#).

According to surveys issued Monday, on the day of the vote by local media, at least 298 deputies—out of a total of 513—declared they would vote in favor of his impeachment. Only four said they would vote to absolve him, 183 said they would abstain and 26 said they would not attend the session.

Lawmakers are expected to vote on a June congressional ethics committee recommendation [in favor of impeaching Cunha](#).

In May, he was suspended from his position as head of the lower house by the Brazilian Supreme Court over accusations of intimidating lawmakers and hampering investigations, one month after the lower chamber voted in favor of Rousseff's impeachment. He faces an eight-year ban from elected office.

Cunha is notorious for using [stalling tactics](#) as the issue of his suspension stood before the council of ethics for months after having been initiated in October, making it the longest process in the history of the council.

Supporters of the Rousseff said Cunha initiated impeachment proceedings against Rousseff as payback after members of her party voted to look into corruption allegations against him.

Rousseff has said that despite the fact that Michel Temer is the acting president, Cunha is really the person [in charge in Brasilia](#), the federal capital. Both Cunha and Temer are members of the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party.

Cunha was a key architect in painting the impeachment process as a campaign to root out government corruption, despite himself facing multimillion dollar bribery and fraud charges.

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