

Kate del Castillo Fears Mexico Is Spying on Her After El Chapo Meeting

By John Hecht

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The film and TV actress, who famously brokered Sean Penn's 'Rolling Stone' interview with drug kingpin El Chapo, told Spanish-language broadcaster Univision that she's terrified to return to her native Mexico.



Courtesy: Univision

Kate del Castillo and Univision's Jorge Ramos

Actress Kate del Castillo braved a face-to-face meeting last year with one of Mexico's most fearsome drug lords, yet it's the Mexican government whom she fears the most nowadays.

Speaking on the Univision weekly news program *Aqui y Ahora*, which aired Sunday night, del Castillo, a naturalized U.S. citizen residing in Los Angeles, believes Mexican authorities are monitoring her phone conversations and text messages when she communicates with her family, friends and lawyers in Mexico.

"You hear it when you go in. In everything, I know that I'm completely wiretapped," she told network anchor Jorge Ramos. "I think (the tapping) is by the Mexican government, I'm almost positive, but I don't know it for a fact. But I know it with all my heart ... because I hear noises that I didn't hear before."

Earlier this year, Mexico's Attorney General's Office said it was investigating del Castillo for possible money laundering. Attorney General Arely Gomez said there were "indications" that the actress may have received illicit funds from Sinaloa drug cartel leader Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman for her tequila brand, Tequila Honor. Authorities said that if del Castillo returns to Mexico, she would be detained for questioning.

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Del Castillo insists she has received no money from El Chapo, and her attorney has requested a court-ordered injunction prohibiting authorities from detaining her.

"I never received money from El Chapo," said *The Queen of the South* actress. "I was never going to do business with him. And that is all, all (the authorities) accuse me of."

The big question is why the Mexican government might be trying to persecute her, as del Castillo claims. Ramos suggested that the government might be scared that El Chapo revealed incriminating information to her about Mexican public figures during their six-hour secret meeting in the mountains.

But del Castillo says they never discussed that.

"The truth is, I don't know why (there's) a terrible witch hunt against me," del Castillo said. "And I hope that things get settled very soon."

Del Castillo met with El Chapo in September along with Penn and two film producers to discuss the possibility of making a biopic about the drug baron's life story. El Chapo granted exclusive rights to del Castillo to make the movie, but she has yet to move forward on the project.

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Univision and Netflix, however, have teamed up to produce a drama series titled *El Chapo*, which is set to air next year. Univision rival Telemundo also is producing a series, *El Chema*, which is based on El Chapo's dramatic prison breakout of a maximum-security facility last year.

El Chapo's lawyer Andres Granados has threatened to file a lawsuit against Univision and Netflix unless royalty payments are made for the *El Chapo* series, according to [The Associated Press](#).

Del Castillo says she could sue as well, but she doesn't know if her legal rights have been violated.

"I have to take a good look at it with my lawyers," she said. "I really cannot stand up to Univision and Telemundo or anybody among all those who are going to do this."

Univision's Ramos also questioned del Castillo about a series of late-night tweets that she posted last month in which she called the presumptive GOP presidential nominee Donald Trump "vulgar, bellicose, racist, egotistical" and then likened him to Hitler.

"How is it possible that there is a presidential candidate with Hitler-style ideas in the first place?" she asked during the interview. "We have gone back decades because of his transgression and his vulgarity full of personal interests."

Del Castillo believes Mexicans and Latinos need a wake-up call ahead of the Nov. 8 election.

"I would like to tell all Mexicans, all Latinos to get out and vote," she said. "Because the African-Americans, something happens and everyone is there and everybody supports each other. We lack unity as Mexicans, as Latinos ... I truly think we need to raise our voices. We are very fearful. The Trump campaign is based on fear."

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Del Castillo is currently working on the Netflix series *Ingobernable*, a political drama in which she plays the wife of Mexico's president.