

Obama defends NSA against latest spying report

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President Barack Obama talks with MSNBC's Chris Matthews during a break in the taping of an interview for the "Hardball with Chris Matthews" show, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2013, at American University in Washington. The show will air later Thursday. (AP Photo/ Evan Vucci)

President Barack Obama is defending the National Security Agency, saying it does a very good job of not engaging in domestic surveillance.

He was responding to a Washington Post report Thursday that the agency tracks locations of nearly 5 billion cellphones every day overseas, including those of Americans.

In a taped interview aired Thursday on MSNBC's "Hardball with Chris Matthews," Obama says the people who want to hurt the U.S. communicate using modern technologies available on cellphones. He says to do a good job protecting the country, the U.S. needs to "keep eyes on some bad actors."

Still, he says he'll propose "some self-restraint" on the agency after a panel of hand-picked advisers reports back this month.

Obama says the NSA isn't interested in reading people's emails and text messages.

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