

Former Ecuadorean president says Assange's days in London embassy are numbered



Quito, July 30 (RHC)-- Ecuador's former president Rafael Correa said in an interview with RT that Julian Assange's days in the Ecuadorean embassy in London are numbered, a claim which contradicts the statements made by Ecuadorean President Lenin Moreno last week.

"You can be certain that this man (referring to Moreno), who is an absolute hypocrite, already has an agreement with the U.S. about what will happen to Assange. And now he's just trying to sweeten the pill by saying he's going to have a dialogue... I fear, and I have said months ago, that Assange's days in the embassy are numbered," Correa affirmed.

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has been living in the Ecuadorean embassy in London since 2012. He was granted asylum by former president Correa to help Assange avoid extradition to the United States, where he could face the death penalty for charges of "espionage and treason."

Last week, Lenin Moreno, who was visiting Spain, told reporters that Assange would eventually have to leave the embassy, but argued his exit had to be obtained "through dialogue." Moreno also confirmed Ecuador has been engaging in diplomatic talks with the United Kingdom to determine Assange's fate.

“Ecuadoreans know how he (Moreno) operates. In the name of dialogue what he did was disguise previous pacts and justified these pacts, the selling out of the country to special interests, through dialogue... Here it is the same, [Moreno] talks about a dialogue, but everything has already been agreed with the UK government, especially after Vice President Pence's visit to Ecuador a few weeks ago,” the former president said.

Correa also criticized Moreno for saying he had “inherited a problem,” when referring to Assange’s asylum. “Now giving a humanitarian asylum is a problem,” Correa said stressing Moreno has no knowledge of the case against WikiLeaks founder. It’s not about guaranteeing Assange will not face the death penalty, but about due process, Correa said in the interview.

In January, Assange was granted Ecuadorean citizenship. Moreno has stated that he did not make that decision, stressing it was former foreign affairs minister, Maria Fernanda Espinosa, who gave Assange citizenship.

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