

U.S. officially files extradition request for Julian Assange



Washington, June 11 (RHC)-- The United States government has formally submitted an extradition request against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to the United Kingdom, according to a U.S. official close to the issue quoted by The Washington Post on Monday.

Assange officially denied his "consent" to an extradition request made by the U.S. on May 2nd, before the Westminster Court of Magistrates in London. At that hearing, Assange said: "I do not wish to surrender for extradition. I'm a journalist winning many, many awards and protecting many people," said Assange who testified by video conference from the Belmarsh maximum security prison, where he is imprisoned after having been condemned by another British court to 50 weeks of jail for violating his conditional freedom in 2012.

The U.S. Justice Department has mounted 18 charges in total against him, with accusations of conspiring with former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning to gain access to a government computer as part of a 2010 leak by WikiLeaks of hundreds of thousands of U.S. military reports about the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and American diplomatic communications.

Ecuadorean President Lenin Moreno allowed Assange's seven-year asylum was abruptly removed and he was arrested by British police on April 11. On April 15, Ecuador's government issued an official statement showing two letters from U.K. officials addressed to President Lenin Moreno, assuring the head

of state that Assange would not be extradited to a country where he could face the death penalty.

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