

# *Former Ecuadorean president Rafael Correa says CNN is building show to extradite Julian Assange*

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Quito, July 18 (RHC)-- In an interview with Russian media RT, Ecuador's former President Rafael Correa questioned the intentions of a recent CNN publication which accuses Julian Assange of having participated in the alleged Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election in the United States.

"CNN is doing its job like when it invented that there were mass weapons of destruction for people to applaud a war, an invasion of Iraq, which cost more than 100,000 civilians lives," said Correa. "Now, in order to justify the assassination of Assange or to extradite him to the U.S., it is fabricating the framework, the 'frame', the history, the 'show', to say that the [Ecuadorean] Embassy had a whole operations center [and that he] demanded fast Internet and we gave it to him."

On July 15, the CNN published an investigation supposedly based on surveillance reports which were compiled by the Spanish security company UC Global for the Ecuadorean government. This information

allegedly demonstrates that the Embassy of Ecuador in London was turned into an operations center to interfere in the 2016 U.S. elections.

Such investigation also holds that "an official of the Ecuadorean Intelligence" confirmed the authenticity of those reports. Nevertheless, CNN did not present any concrete evidence of the alleged Russian interference.

In that sense, Correa asserted that the CNN publication is based on inferences taken from the report of the Special prosecutor Robert Mueller, who also could not demonstrate that Russia had interfered in the U.S. elections. "They are referring to a third source just like [they did in the case of] the weapons of mass destructions so as to justify the invasion of Iraq," the former Ecuadorean president warned.

Correa defined as "another CNN nonsense" the information according to which U.S. authorities warned Ecuadorean diplomats about Assange attempts to interfere in the 2016 elections. "The publication affirms that U.S. officials [made] a diplomatic threat to Ecuadorean officials. They have never told me and I do not believe that it existed," he maintains.

"When we saw Julian was publishing data about Hillary Clinton in the 2016 elections, we warned him two or three times. And on the third or fourth occasion, we acted and shut down the Internet from Oct. 17 until after the elections, which was November 8th," recalled Correa.

Under the Presidency of Rafael Correa, Assange was granted asylum in 2012 at the Ecuadorean Embassy in London, where he stayed for almost 7 years. In 2019, under the Presidency of Lenin Moreno, Ecuadorean authorities allowed the U.K. police to drag the WikiLeaks founder out of the diplomatic building.

Currently, Assange, who is in a London prison serving a 50-week sentence for jumping bail in the U.K. is fighting through his lawyers requests for extradition to the United States.

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