

*Spanish court summons former
U.S. secretary of state over plot to
kill Julian Assange*



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Madrid, June 23 (RHC)--Spain's National High Court has summoned Mike Pompeo, former U.S. secretary of state, to appear in the Madrid court to explain an alleged plot by Washington to assassinate Australian-born WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

Judge Santiago Pedraz, of Spain's National Court, is leading an investigation into whether Spanish security firm UC Global spied on Assange on behalf of the CIA while providing security for the Ecuadorian embassy in London, where the whistleblower resided between 2012 and 2019.

A spokesman for Spain's National Court told The Telegraph on Monday that Judge Pedraz had sent a request to U.S. authorities to call Pompeo as a witness. "There has been no reply as yet," the spokesman added.

The alleged assassination plot was first revealed by Yahoo News last November. According to the report, senior CIA and Trump administration officials discussed the possibility of kidnapping or killing Assange after he published CIA hacking tools in 2017.

The outlet reported that discussions took place at the "highest levels" of the administration of then-President Donald Trump, going so far as to request "sketches" or "options" for how to kill him. A former senior counterintelligence official said: "There seemed to be no boundaries."

Judge Pedraz summoned Pompeo and former U.S. counterintelligence official William Evanina as witnesses to explain whether the plot was drawn up. Mike Pompeo was the director of the CIA from 2017 to 2018 when Trump appointed him as secretary of state.

Assange's lawyers in Spain, including the former judge Baltasar Garzón, stated that the Trump administration "orchestrated" the espionage effort against the Australian. UC Global placed microphones and cameras in the Ecuadorian embassy in London to spy on his private conversations and meetings.

The British Home Office has decided to extradite Assange to the United States, where he is wanted for his role in leaking thousands of secret government documents.

Observers say Assange's extradition to the United States, should it occur, will have a "chilling" effect on press freedoms around the world. Assange, who is now 50 years-old, is wanted by the U.S. government for publishing classified documents related to the Iraq and Afghanistan wars that were leaked by whistleblower Chelsea Manning, a U.S. Army intelligence analyst.

In 2010 WikiLeaks published about 750,000 classified military and diplomatic documents. The most devastating batch was The Iraqi War Logs, which represent the biggest military leak in the history of the United States.

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