

Keiko Fujimori released, Peruvian minister resigns as corrupt judge flees



Lima, Octobers 19 (RHC)-- In Peru, Keiko Fujimori, a current legislator and daughter of former dictator Alberto Fujimori, convicted of crimes against humanity, was released from a 10-day preventative detention after being arrested in connection to receiving up to \$1.2 million from Odebrecht to fund her 2011 presidential run.

Photos of her by Reuters show Fujimori smiling and waving to cameras as the Second National Criminal Chamber of Appeals nulled a prior ruling from Judge Richard Concepcion Carhuancho who had ordered her detention for up to 18 months along with 19 others in the Popular Forces political party and Odebrecht construction company.

The appeals court judges -- Cesar Salhuanay Calsin, Ivan Quispe Auca, and Maria Leon Yarango -- unanimously decided there wasn't substantial evidence to suspect that those indicted would try to flee. Two members of Popular Forces, Ana Herz, and Pier Figari will remain detained, but local media reports that they will likely be released in the coming days.

After reading the ruling, the opposition leader wept and hugged her lawyer and her husband in the room.

"I will never leave the country," Fujimori said earlier in the hearing.

State prosecutors Rafael Vela Barba and Jose Domingo Perez, are still moving forward with requesting Fujimori's preventative detention of up to 36 months while the investigation continues.

However, one former state official, deposed National Council Magistrate Cesar Hinostroza, highly implicated in this widespread corruption scandal that has infiltrated several branches and all levels of government, in fact, did flee the country to Spain. He was arrested Friday morning in Madrid by INTERPOL.

Peruvian President Martin Vizcarra has accepted the resignation of Interior Minister Mauro Medina after Hinostroza escaped the country via Ecuador in the early morning of October 7th.

The former judge was suspended from his post months ago then dismissed by Congress in early October after he was accused of influencing cases as part of a larger organized crime ring within the government. Keiko had denied meeting with Hinostroza via a tweet on August 31st of this year, then later admitted to a private meeting with the magistrate as her corruption case was developing.

"In view of the seriousness of the events, I have decided to accept the resignation of the Minister of the Interior. We will not stop in our frontal fight against corruption," Vizcarra said in his Twitter account.

President Vizcarra has led a reform in the judicial and political system after the far-reaching Hinostroza corruption scandal erupted in July.

Peruvian Prime Minister Cesar Villanueva told a news conference that Hinostroza left the country on Sunday, October 7th, evading immigration control of the northern border with Ecuador and then headed to the city of Guayaquil, where he took a plane to Amsterdam. From there he went to Madrid, Spain, where he requested "asylum" at a police station which authorities there rejected.

"We are activating all mechanisms, both internal and external, so that we can soon have the capture of a person who, unfortunately, had a high position as a judge in this country and has emerged as a vulgar criminal," said Villanueva at a press conference.

"We are acting quickly as possible," added Villanueva along with the Justice, Foreign Affairs and Interior ministers for the former judge's return to Peru.

Prosecutor Jose Domingo Perez Gómez will present a preparatory investigation against Keiko Fujimori and other Popular Forces leaders.

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