

Argentinian president says he will not hand over Evo Morales



Buenos Aires, December 20 (RHC)-- Argentinian President Alberto Fernandez has announced that his government "will not hand over for any reason" the constitutional president of Bolivia Evo Morales who is in Buenos Aires under refugee status. On Wednesday, the Bolivian coup authorities issued an arrest warrant for Evo, accusing him of "sedition and terrorism."

A senior official at the Casa Rosada -- Argentina's presidential residence -- revealed to the national news outlet Infobae that the Argentinian president contacted Evo Morales to give him his full support and assure him that his country will protect his physical integrity and prevent him from being handed over to the judicial authorities in Bolivia that currently is under the control of a de facto government.

"We are going to protect Evo Morales because it is appropriate to do so as a political refugee and because the entire request for his detention is a farce," another government official told Infobae.

Earlier this week, the Bolivian Prosecutor's Office issued a warrant for the arrest of Morales "for the alleged commission of the crimes of sedition, terrorism and the financing of terrorism." The order deals with the accusation of the de facto government of Jeanine Añez last November against Morales, who was accused of inciting violence from his asylum in Mexico, a country that first received him, during the demonstrations following the coup against his government.

The complaint is based on supposed evidence that includes a video in which a voice attributed to Morales is heard, the authenticity of which has been challenged by critics as it has only been presented by the Añez government, and not by any other independent sources.

For the Argentinean government, Morales will continue to have immunity and diplomatic protection because he is a refugee and they will not accept his arrest within Argentinian territory. It was also determined that the security of the ex-president who until a few days ago had only two police officers, would be increased, Argentinean officials told Infobae.

Also, the Fernandez government, through its Foreign Ministry, is analyzing the request for arrest from Bolivia in order to submit a legal response for the rejection of this order.

For his part, Evo Morales, through his Twitter account, denounced on Wednesday that the order against him is "unjust, illegal and unconstitutional" and said he was not afraid of threats and will continue to fight for a free and sovereign Bolivia.

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