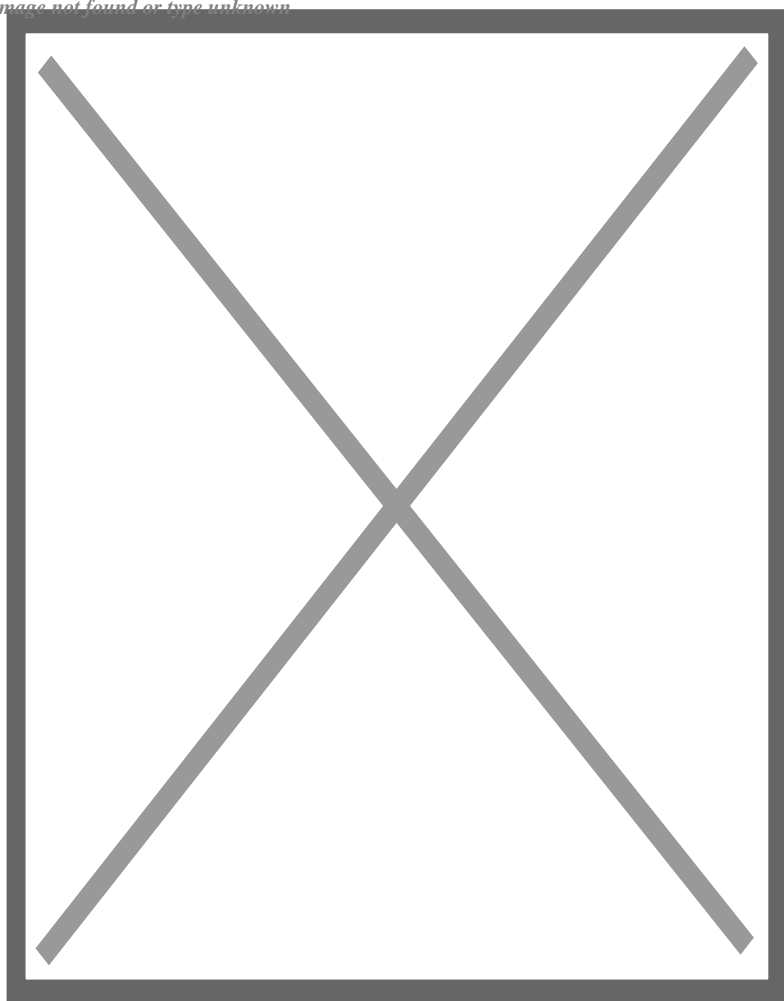


Lula da Silva calls for release of Julian Assange

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Brasilia, November 30 (RHC)-- Brazil's President-elect Lula da Silva called for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to be released from his "unjust prison."

The Brazilian leader, who will assume his third term as Brazil's head of state in January, defended Assange and press freedom after meeting Monday night in Brasilia with WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Kristinn Hrafnsson and WikiLeaks publisher Joseph Farrell. "They informed me about Julian Assange's health situation and the fight for his freedom. I asked them to send him my solidarity. May Assange be released from his unjust prison," the Workers' Party leader said.

Hrafnsson stated that Brazil's president-elect expressed his continued support for Assange and his request to stop the persecution he suffers.

Since 2019, Assange has been imprisoned in London's Belmarsh prison awaiting his extradition to the U.S., where he is charged with 17 counts of espionage and computer intrusion due to the disclosure of confidential documents about the Guantanamo naval base and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In July, Assange filed a petition to challenge his extradition before the London High Court, after the then British Home Secretary Priti Patel signed the extradition order.

On Monday, the international media that supported WikiLeaks in releasing classified documents, including the New York Times, Le Monde, El Pais, Der Spiegel, and The Guardian, asked the U.S. to drop the legal process against Assange for being a so-called "threat" to press freedom.

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