

Assange Won't Leave Embassy While U.S. Pursues Case



London, March 20 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Julian Assange will stay in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London as long as the United States government continues its case against him for his work on whistle-blowing website Wikileaks, his lawyers said Thursday.

The recent development of the Swedish prosecutors agreeing to question Assange within the embassy, over two cases of sexual assault in 2010, led to speculation that the Australian national could leave the building, where he has taken refuge for just over 1,000 days, if the Swedish charges are dropped.

Assange, who has never been charged, has always denied those accusations. "Even were the Swedish case to be disposed of, the U.K. would arrest Assange upon leaving the embassy for claimed violations of bail conditions or something similar," Ratner told Reuters.

In an interview with teleSUR marking his 1,000th day in the embassy, Assange made it clear that it was not just Sweden's warrant that prevented him from leaving. "The U.K. has said that even if that happens they are going to arrest me anyway and you also have the U.S. case," he told teleSUR.

No guarantees have been given that the publisher would not be extradited to the U.S. for questioning over his Wikileaks role, which is considered one of the biggest and most damaging military leaks ever.

However, Ecuadorean Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño remains positive over the outcome due to the latest development of the Swedish prosecutors coming to London. “This allows us to see a light at the end of the tunnel,” Ecuador’s top diplomat said Thursday in an interview in Washington.

“That light is still not close, but it is the first time that there is a movement in the Swedish judicial system that makes one think that one might be able to proceed with a statement.”

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