

Honduran Court Issues Arrest Order for Congress Vice President



Tegucigalpa, July 1 (teleSUR-RHC)-- The Honduran Supreme Court ordered the arrest of Congress Vice President Lena Gutierrez and 15 other people – including her father and two brothers – late Tuesday over charges of defrauding the country's health care system.

The decision follows a series of mass protests staged by hundreds of thousands of angry citizens who have taken to the streets of the country over the past few months demanding the resignation of President Juan Orlando Hernandez. The president is accused of having received nearly \$90 million out of more than \$300 million allegedly skimmed from Honduras' public health system for his 2013 election campaign.

Honduras Gutierrez is involved in a large corruption scheme that includes the irregular sale of medicines, according to the top court's president Jorge Rivera. The arrest warrant was issued in order to prevent those involved to leave the country.

Those implicated are being charged with misuse of documents and fraud in the sale of medicines to the Honduran Institute of Social Security and the Ministry of Health.

Prosecutors in Honduras have said that AstroPharma company, owned by Gutierrez's family, sold the government drugs of questionable quality and with inflated prices. However, the lawmaker has denied the accusations.

The United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) announced on Monday that they will assist the government of Hernandez to reinforce the national dialogue in the violence-stricken Central American nation.

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