

Mexico Formally Opens Extradition Process Against 'El Chapo'



Mexico City, January 11 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Mexico's government has formally begun extradition proceedings against Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman after informing the recaptured drug kingpin that he is wanted in the United States.

The attorney general's office explained in a statement that Interpol agents had told the fugitive cartel leader that two U.S. arrest warrants are being processed.

The drug lord, who had been at large after escaping jail July last year, could be extradited as soon as mid-2016, a source close to the situation told Reuters over the weekend.

The U.S. requested Guzman's extradition in June 2015 just weeks before his brazen escape from a maximum security prison. However the timing might depend on injunctions filed by Guzman's legal team and approvals from officials.

Juan Pablo Badillo, an attorney representing Guzman, said the leader of the notorious Sinaloa Cartel could not be extradited due to laws in the Mexican constitution. "In strict accordance with the constitution,

he cannot nor should not be extradited to any foreign country," Badillo told local television channel Milenio.

One day after his re-capture Guzman was sent back to the same maximum-security jail from which he escaped through a tunnel six months ago.

This was the second time that 57-year-old "El Chapo" had escaped from a Mexican jail. In 2001 he sneaked out of Puente Grande prison by reportedly hiding in a laundry cart after bribing officials.

He was recaptured by Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto's government 13 years later, but fears the drug lord may escape again could spur his extradition to the U.S.

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