

Swedish Authorities to Question Julian Assange at Ecuadorean Embassy in London



London, January 15 (RHC)-- Ecuador says it has agreed to a Swedish request for permission to interrogate Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, in its embassy in London. Ecuadorean Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño said: "We will cooperate with the Swedish authorities so they can take some statements. We have said that from the beginning."

Patiño said the interrogation would be carried out by Ecuadoran prosecutors, though Swedish prosecutors could also be present. Swedish authorities, however, said in an earlier statement that questioning would be carried out by Chief District Prosecutor Ingrid Isgren and a police investigator.

Sweden's prosecution authority said it had sent a written request to the state prosecutor's office in Ecuador and asked for the permission. The Scandinavian country and Ecuador signed an agreement on judicial cooperation in December that is expected to allow Sweden to move forward with the interrogation of Assange.

Assange took refuge in the country's embassy in London in June 2012 to avoid extradition to Sweden where he faces rape and sexual assault allegations, although no formal charges have been filed. He

denies the accusations, saying they are made up to discredit him for revealing secret U.S. documents.

The WikiLeaks whistleblower says he fears Sweden will extradite him to the United States, where he could be put on trial over the publication of thousands of classified military and diplomatic documents.

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