Brazilian Supreme Court suspends Lula's transfer to Sao Paulo jail

Brasilia, August 8 (RHC)-- Brazil's Supreme Court (STF) decided Wednesday afternoon to suspend a ruling rendered by Carolina Lebbos, the substitute judge of the 12th Federal Court of Curitiba, to transfer former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, from federal jail in Curitiba to a penitentiary in the state of Sao Paulo.

Lebbos authorized the transfer Wednesday morning, deciding that Lula would serve the rest of his sentence at a penitentiary in the town of Tremembe, located 150 km from Sao Paulo. The case was pushed for trial by the president of the Supreme Court, Minister Jose Antonio Dias Toffoli, and ten of the eleven justices overruled the decision saying that Lula should stay in Curitiba until they can judge other pending appeals filed by his lawyers seeking his release.

The historic leader of the Brazilian left has been in prison since April 7, 2018, over corruption charges that media leaks and legal experts have exposed as politically motivated. Attorneys for Lula have been petitioning the Supreme Court for his release and seized on reports released by The Intercept Brazil, denouncing the political motivations behind Operation Car Wash (Lava Jato) task force against Lula, to

argue that his sentence should be overturned.

Some intercepted conversations published recently in Brazil proved that prosecutors discussed how to block journalists from interviewing Lula in jail during last year's campaign. A message attributed to one of the prosecutors, Laura Tessler, suggested that such an interview could help Lula's stand-in on the Workers' Party ticket.

On June 25, Brazil's Supreme Federal Court rejected two appeals that attempted to grant freedom to the former president. The third motion, which was the Habeas Corpus hearing initiated on December 2018, was suspended once again and rescheduled for the second half of this year.

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