

Lula da Silva's legal team submits new writ of habeas corpus, urges UN to prevent his detention



Brasilia, April 6 (RHC)-- Lawyers for former Brazilian President Luiz Inacio 'Lula' da Silva have submitted a new writ of habeas corpus to the country's Supreme Court of Justice. The petition, submitted in the early morning hours on Friday, seeks to have the arrest warrant issued by judge Sergio Moro revoked.

Lula's attorneys argue that he still has legal and other matters to pursue that contest his conviction by Brazil's Fourth Regional Federal Court. Hence, in accordance with his constitutional rights, he cannot be detained until such measures are entirely exhausted.

The defense team has also presented a precautionary appeal to the United Nations Human Rights Committee seeking to have them stop his detention until the judicial process is exhausted.

Lula's defense lawyer Cristiano Zanin said: "It's evident this situation is illegal and the defense will analyze and verify the possible measures because it's not compatible with the law. It's not compatible with the federal constitution, because the constitution prevents knowing the sentence ahead of the final and definitive guilty verdict, which does not exist in the case of former president Lula."

Media reports state Lula will not appear before the police on Friday as ordered by judge Moro after the Federal Supreme Court of Brazil rejected on Wednesday his previous habeas corpus plea.

Moro issued an arrest warrant for the former head of state on Thursday. It ordered Lula to turn himself in at the federal police headquarters in Curitiba before 5:00 PM, local time Friday, to begin serving his 12 year and one-month sentence as set by the Fourth Regional Federal Court.

The supreme court's ruling against Lula and the subsequent arrest warrant have sparked yet more massive protests, as Brazilians have poured into the streets to express their strong rejection.

Protesters arrived in Brasilia from all over the country and marched while declaring their support for Lula, the front-runner in all opinion polls ahead of presidential elections in October.

The country's Workers Party, of which Lula is a founder, said they will stand by him 'no matter what.'

Meanwhile, the Landless Workers Movement announced that they would block more 50 highways in 24 states to protest the arrest warrant. Other social movements and unions are planning more demonstrations throughout the country.

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