

Brazilian Worker's Party vows to maintain vigil until Lula is free



Curitiba, April 9 (RHC)-- Brazilian Worker's Party President Gleisi Hoffmann said demonstrators will maintain the vigil at the camp outside of the Curitiba prison until Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva is released.

Lula's lawyers were denied a writ of habeas corpus by the Supreme Court of Justice (STJ) that sought to revoke Lula's arrest warrant to immediately begin serving a 12-year sentence for supposedly taking Odebrecht kickbacks.

His defense team argues that the Worker's Party's (PT) presidential candidate, well ahead in the polls, still has legal avenues available to him to contest his corruption conviction by Brazil's Fourth Regional Federal Court (TRF-4). Constitutionally, he cannot be detained until all such measures have been taken.

Gleisi Hoffman told Lula's supporters gathered outside the detention center that their national leader "remains at peace." The PT president added: "It's unjustifiable what happened here. We talked to the police commander and we've requested an investigation," referring to police repression against protesters outside the jail where Lula turned himself in and was taken into custody.

Jean-Luc Melenchon, leader of the French political party, La France Insoumise, tweeted that Lula's imprisonment is political. "Lula has never become corrupt. That's a lie. It's a judicial coup. He was 15 points ahead in the (presidential) polls."

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.

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