

Lula's defense team challenges conviction, citing judge's bias



Brasilia, November 7 (RHC)-- Former Brazilian President Lula da Silva's defense team is filing a "habeas corpus" in a fight for his freedom, arguing that the judicial decision to imprison him for 12 years was not impartial.

Lula's attorneys say that Judge Sergio Moro "showed clear bias and political motivation" in the criminal proceedings against Lula considering his rush to accept the prestigious position of Minister of Justice and Public Security minister from newly elected President Jair Bolsonaro.

The lawyers allege that Moro had "extrajudicial interests" during a highly controversial and tense presidential race and was in close contact with Bolsonaro during the trial against Lula. Judge Moro has now officially announced his departure from the Lava Jato case in order to accept the post in the new administration.

For these reasons, Lula's defense team argues in its petition that the whole case, which is built on dubious allegations of corruption and money laundering, could be nullified.

Moro oversaw the so-called "Operation Car Wash" probe that convicted former progressive president Lula for alleged bribery and money laundering, blocking him from running against Jair Bolsonaro earlier this year, when he led opinion polls.

According to a Reuters report, Moro flew to Bolsonaro's beachside Rio de Janeiro home last week, where he met with Brazil's next president for about an hour before both announced the decision.

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