

# *Former Ecuadorean foreign minister says Julian Assange arrest part of multi-billion dollar IMF deal*

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Quito, April 16 (RHC)-- According to the former foreign minister under Rafael Correa, the current President of Ecuador Lenin Moreno turned on Julian Assange to improve relationships with the United States and secure a multi-billion dollar deal with the International Monetary Fund.

In an interview with Resumen del Sur outlet, Ricardo Patiño affirmed that Ecuador had agreed with U.S. Vice President Mike Pence on three main issues: to adopt the U.S. position regarding Venezuela, to end South American economic integration, and to expel Assange from the Ecuadoran embassy in London in exchange of a "miserable loan from the International Monetary Fund."

Such U.S. sentiment was far from hidden during Pence's visit where he said: "Before your election, our nations had experienced 10 difficult years where our people always felt close, but our governments drifted apart," he said alongside Moreno in Quito, last June. "But over the past year, Mr. President, thanks to

your leadership and the actions that you've taken have brought us closer together once again."

In March, Ecuador received a \$4.2 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund, to which the U.S. is the largest contributor. After Assange's expulsion and arrest Thursday, Correa tweeted that Moreno was "the greatest traitor in Ecuadorian and Latin American history."

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