

Finally freed from prison, Lula vows to fight for justice



Brasilia, November 8 (RHC)-- Former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was released on Friday, one day after Brazil's Supreme Court decided to end the mandatory imprisonment of convicts after they lose their first appeal.

In a speech delivered just outside of the detention center in Curitiba, Lula thanked all of the people involved on his defense team. He said: "I want the Public Ministry and Judge Sergio Moro to know that they did not imprison a man, they tried to kill an idea, but ideas don't die, they do not disappear."

As he walked out of jail, Lula raised a defiant fist of victory in the air to the cheers of a crowd of supporters and members of his Workers Party who waved red flags and held "Free Lula" banners.

In his first remarks to thousands of awaiting supporters, Lula da Silva said: "They tried to create the image that I was a thief with Globo TV, but they don't represent 10 percent of the people I represent." Lula vowed to fight to establish his innocence and denounced what he called the "rotten side of the judicial system" for "working to criminalize the left."

He announced that his next step will be going to Sao Paulo to the union for metal workers first, and then will start touring the country in order to renew the popular campaign he was forced to interrupt.

After thanking many comrades from the Workers Party, which he leads, as well as the PSOL and PSDB, the opposition leader also introduced his daughter and his grandson, and his "future partner of life." He also thanked his mother, recalling that she was "illiterate" when he grew up.

"My heart does not have any hatred inside, I am living the prison filled with love," he concluded.

Curitiba Judge Danilo Perreira Jr. ordered his release after Lula's defense lawyer Cristiano Zanin met with him on Friday and submitted a request for immediate release. His attorney said: "Lula has not committed any crime and is a victim of the law, which, in the case of the former president, is the strategic use of the law for the purpose of political persecution."

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