

Peru opposition leader accused of graft released from jail



Lima, November 26 (RHC)-- The Constitutional Court of Peru granted Monday a "habeas corpus" appeal to President of the Fuerza Popular (Popular Force) and opposition leader Keiko Fujimori, effectively nulling the preventive detention issued against her as part of the investigation for the alleged money laundering, criminal organization and obstruction of justice.

With four votes in favor and three against, the judges approved the writ which was presented by Sachi Fujimori, sister of the former presidential candidate in July. Back in January, a Peruvian court upheld the preventive detention.

Fujimori was serving a 36-month preventive prison sentence since September 2018, a decision that was reduced to 18 months, by the Supreme Court of Justice of Peru and was set to expire in April 2020.

Keiko was taken into custody in October 2018 for allegedly attempting to buy witnesses in the money laundering investigation against her in the sprawling Odebrecht corruption case in Peru. She was initially being investigated for accepting around \$1.2 million in bribes from the Brazilian construction company for her 2011 presidential campaign.

The daughter of former authoritarian Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) and her political advisor both deny that state prosecutors have any proof against them even though former Odebrecht

CEO Marcelo Odebrecht and the company's director in Peru, Jorge Barata already confessed to making illicit campaign donations to Peruvian prosecutors in 2018.

According to special prosecutors Jose Domingo Perez and Rafael Vela, in charge of the case against Fujimori and other cases within the sprawling Odebrecht scandal, Keiko leads "a criminal organization" within her party. She has a 19 percent approval rating according to Ipsos for her current work within the national legislator which doesn't bode well for her 2021 presidential hopes.

Now the decision comes as the country prepares to hold legislative elections on January 26 after President Martin Vizcarra dissolved Congress amid a battle with lawmakers over his anti-graft campaign. Keiko Fujimori's Popular Force party had held a majority in Congress before its dissolution.

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