

Salvadoran Ex-President Accused of Fraud Suffers Brain Damage



San Salvador, January 29 (RHC-teleSUR) -- The former president of El Salvador facing charges for corruption, Francisco Flores, has suffered “irreversible neurological impairment” according to medical reports released Thursday, which is likely to impact the former head of state’s ability to stand trial for money laundering and embezzlement.

Flores went into a coma Sunday after suffering a stroke and has been left with “severe brain swelling,” according to a clinical report delivered to court at the request of complainants in the case. The report added that Flores, who is 56 years old, does not meet the criteria of being brain dead.

It is unclear when Flores will be fit to leave the hospital. Since November 2014, he has been receiving treatment for thrombosis in his legs, a condition of blood clotting in the circulatory system. However, medical reports say the ailments are unrelated.

Flores was president of El Salvador from 1999 to 2002. He is accused of intentionally diverting at least US\$10 million of a donation from the government of Taiwan to the private account of his right-wing ARENA party.

The donation had been earmarked as relief funds after a major earthquake rocked El Salvador in January 2001, killing over 900 people and damaging hundreds of thousands of homes and buildings.

Flores' trial for charges of illicit enrichment and embezzlement was set to begin Jan. 18, 2016, but was rescheduled to an unspecified date due to failure to secure a witness.

Money laundering charges against Flores were dropped last month.

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