

WikiLeaks' Julian Assange Granted Ecuadorean Citizenship



Quito, January 11 (RHC)-- WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has been granted Ecuadorean citizenship and a registration code by the country's embassy in London, where he is currently staying under the protection of Quito.

In a picture posted Wednesday on his personal Twitter account, Assange appears wearing a jersey from Ecuador's national football team.

A statement issued by Ecuador's Foreign Ministry said: "The actual government inherited this issue and it's looking for solution alternatives, with full respect of national and international law, as well as human rights... in coordination with the United Kingdom, with which we have the best friendship and cooperation relations."

The statement said that Assange is committed to not "intervening in issues non-related with his asylum condition," as requested by Ecuadorean government.

The Foreign Office in the UK has confirmed that Assange faces arrest for breaching bail conditions if he leaves the embassy premises. The Ecuadorean government had requested that he be granted diplomatic status as a means of breaking the stalemate over his status, but that request has been denied.

On Tuesday, Ecuadorean Foreign Minister María Fernanda Espinoza said in a press conference that the ministry is "exploring alternatives" and pointed out that the UK had "shown interest in finding a solution."

Rumors about Assange's condition were sparked January 1st when he tweeted a 60-character code and a link to the song "Paper Planes" by British singer MIA. The Ecuadorean government has since insisted that "nothing has happened."

The Australian activist now appears in Ecuador's Civil Registry database and holds an identity document: 'Julian Paul Assange' is registered in the Internal Revenue Service with document number 1729926483.

Assange has been sheltered by the Ecuadorean Embassy in London since June 19, 2012, when he was granted asylum. The UK's Supreme Court had ruled he had to face two sexual abuse charges in Sweden, but the investigations were dropped last October by the Swedish Public Prosecutor.

The U.S. Justice Department has been investigating Assange since 2010, when WikiLeaks posted thousands of classified files with the help of former army officer Chelsea Manning, then known as Bradley Manning, although he has yet to be charged in connection.

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