

Revocation of Lula's Passport Forces Him to Cancel Trip to Ethiopia



Rio de Janeiro, January 26 (RHC)-- Brazil's former President Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva has been forced to cancel a trip to Ethiopia, after court authorities revoked his passport, the Justice Ministry confirmed Thursday.

The decision was authorized by Federal judge Ricardo Leite after a failed court appeal earlier this week.

Lula had planned to travel to the African country on Friday to attend an FAO meeting.

Lula's lawyer Cristiano Zanin said Lula's passport would be handed in on Friday, but called the decision "shocking" and an unnecessary restriction on his freedom of movement.

"Former President Lula was guaranteed by the Federal Constitution the right to come and go, which can only be restricted in the event of a final and unappealable conviction, which does not exist and we do not believe it will exist because he did not commit any crime," a statement from the defense said.

On Thursday Lula announced his resolve to continue his race for the presidential candidacy on behalf of the Workers Party.

Meanwhile, lawyer Patrick Mariano, of the National Network of Popular Lawyers (Renap) of Brazil, considered that the sentence of 12 years against the former president for alleged passive corruption and money laundering is "exacerbated and disproportionate, and beyond any justification "

"He is a primary prisoner, with no antecedent, a minimum penalty should be applied. This is a total breach of legal requirements," he said.

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