

France Rejects Asylum Request by WikiLeaks Founder



Paris, July 3 (RHC)-- France has rejected an asylum request by the founder of whistleblower website WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, saying he does not face “an immediate danger” to justify asylum.

In a letter to French President Francois Hollande, which was published by France's Le Monde daily, Assange said he was a “journalist pursued and threatened with death by the United States’ authorities as a result of” his professional activities. He also said he has “never been formally charged with an offence or a common crime, anywhere in the world, including Sweden and the UK.”

Later in the day, Hollande’s office released a statement, saying: “France cannot act on his request. Furthermore, he is subject to a European arrest warrant.”

Back in 2010, Assange won international prominence and angered the U.S. administration by publishing hundreds of thousands of secret U.S. military and diplomatic documents, including those related to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

He has been confined to the Ecuadorian embassy in London since June 2012. He secured political asylum from Quito after he lost a legal battle against extradition to Sweden, where he faces allegations of rape and sexual assault. The anti-privacy campaigner has denied the accusations.

Assange believes his potential extradition to Sweden would be a pretext for sending him to the U.S., where he is wanted over the massive release of classified U.S. documents.

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