

Ecuadorean Foreign Minister Says London Threatens Quito Over Julian Assange



Quito, June 28 (RHC)-- Ecuador's Foreign Minister Guillaume Long said he has received threats from British diplomats, while they continued to refuse to cooperate with the asylum case of Julian Assange.

Speaking with reporters in Quito, Long said he discussed with diplomats a way to work towards fixing some problems that the members of the Ecuadorean embassy are experiencing, including poor Internet connection and phone communication. The Ecuadorian foreign minister said the embassy is "interfered with and hacked."

According to Long, diplomats said they will not cooperate with Ecuador until Assange leaves the embassy. Long said their threat is an attempt to prevent bilateral agreements in commerce, education and humanitarian help. The top Ecuadorean diplomat said: "We haven't allowed them to intimidate us: no type of harassment has ever worked in the past." And he added: "It's their loss. If they don't want a positive bilateral relation, it's sad. But we will work with other countries."

The Ecuadorean foreign minister said British authorities had previously threatened the South American nation saying it would enter its embassy by force to remove Assange.

?Julian Assange, whistleblower and founder of WikiLeaks, marked four years under arbitrary detention. Assange has been holed up in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London since June 19, 2012, after he secured political asylum from that country.

He maintains that if he is sent to Sweden he would be extradited to the United States where he could face criminal charges punishable by death as a result of his association with WikiLeaks.

In 2010, WikiLeaks released more than 90,000 secret documents on the U.S.-led military campaign in Afghanistan, followed by almost 400,000 U.S. military reports detailing operations and abuses in Iraq. Those disclosures were followed by the release of millions of diplomatic cables dating back to 1973.

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