

Ecuador's Ousted Leader Starts Exile in Brazil

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Ecuador's ousted President, Lucio Gutiérrez, is already in Brazil where he arrived this afternoon in a Brazilian government jet. Gutiérrez traveled to Brasília, the Brazilian capital, with his wife Ximena Bohórquez Romero and daughter Viviana Estefania. A second daughter, Carina Ximena, who is in the Ecuadorian army remained in Ecuador.

The ex-president is starting his exile in Brazil, four days after being removed from office. He left Quito on a Brazilian air force plane.

Mr. Gutiérrez had been in the residence of Brazil's ambassador since Ecuador's congress voted him from office on Wednesday following a week of massive street protests against his administration.

The crisis began last December, when Mr. Gutierrez fired 27 of the 31 justices on the Supreme Court after accusing them of bias against him. The move prompted weeks of street protests.

Protesters had been camped outside the residence demanding that Mr. Gutiérrez be tried for abuse of power.

A state prosecutor also had ordered his arrest in connection with the deaths of two people in the recent clashes between police and protesters.

Earlier, Brazilian Ambassador Sergio Florencia said he was waiting for the right security conditions to fly Mr. Gutiérrez out of Ecuador. A prosecutor has called for the deposed president's arrest for the deaths of two people killed during recent violent protests.

Vice President Alfredo Palacio was sworn in to replace the ousted leader.

U.S Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, in Lithuania for a meeting of NATO foreign ministers, Thursday urged Ecuadorians to follow a constitutional process toward possible new elections.

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