

Ecuador Plans to Request Gutiérrez Extradition from Brazil

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The authorization, given by the new Ecuadorean government, allowing ex-president Lucio Gutiérrez to leave the country and become a political refugee in Brazil, anticipates the right to request his immediate extradition.

Gutiérrez is being accused by Ecuadorean population of having authorized violent police action against people who were demanding he left the government. Hundreds of Ecuadoreans were wounded during the conflicts, and at least one person died - photographer Julio Garcia.

For security reasons, Brazilian government kept the information about the authorization secret. The authorization was given Friday, but it was only officially confirmed after Gutiérrez fled the country. The document was necessary to warrant the integrity and freedom of the ex-president until his departure to Brazil.

The authorization was signed by the new president Alfredo Palácio, and by Ecuador's Minister of Foreign Relations, Antonio Parra Gil. The text cites the Brazilian diplomatic note, which explained the asylum as a proposal to "contribute to the democratic stability of Ecuador," and to the normalization of the country's internal situation.

Gutiérrez, who was removed by the voting of 60 deputies last Wednesday, April 20, arrived in Brazil Sunday. The ex-president, his wife, Ximena Bohórquez, and their 15-year old daughter, Viviana Estefanía, will stay at a Brazilian Army hotel, located in Brasília, until they obtain formal visas.

He was received by families of the Brazilian military. No diplomat of the Ecuadorean embassy was present at the arrival.

Tomorrow, Brazil's Minister of Justice, Márcio Thomaz Bastos, will receive Gutiérrez, to formalize his request for political asylum.

In Brazil, the asylum is granted for a two-year period, with the possibility of extension.

Even though President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva had already conceded the authorization, formal requirement is indispensable.

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