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Lula's Defense, There's Evidence of his Innocence

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Brasilia, May 4 (Prensa Latina) Lawyers Valeska Teixeira and Cristiano Zanin, of the defense of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, confirmed that there is evidence of the innocence of the former Brazilian president, who has been in prison since April 2018, which is currently ignored by the justice system.

Ex-President Lula has always made it very clear that this trial was unfair and partial,' says Teixeira, who, along with Zanin, gave an interview to Carta Capital magazine.

Both jurists relate that '73 witnesses were heard and none of them made any statement that could confirm the accusatory hypothesis'.

However, they add, Lula was convicted because the informant Léo Pinheiro, a defendant in the trial, 'gave a testimony that served as a basis for that conviction, through a fantasy version, which we understand liar and that he himself said he was altering the previous position.

It was changing because it was negotiating an agreement with the Federal Public Ministry (MPF) for profit, Zanin said.

Since April 7, 2018, Lula has been in prison for allegedly receiving a luxurious triplex apartment in the city of Guarujá, on the Sao Paulo coast, from the OAS construction company in exchange for favoring the company in contracts with state-owned oil company Petrobras.

Faced with the accusations, the former trade unionist insists that he is the victim of real political

persecution and that he will fight to the end for his dignity.

According to the lawyers, there were events that influenced the trial.

We had several anomalies during the process, a procedure clearly linked to the political events in the country, a record speed imposed on the process before the 2018 elections, that is to say, we had a strategic action of the Judicial Branch,' they point out.

Recently, the Supreme Court of Justice (STJ) reduced Lula's sentence from 12 years and one month to eight years and 10 months for passive corruption and money laundering.

In a unanimous decision, the fifth court of the STJ nevertheless upheld the punishment against the ex-president and the votes were pronounced during the trial on an appeal filed by his defense.

In this regard, lawyers comment that what was obtained was little. We were waiting for absolution, because it's the right result to evaluate, but we're going to look for it until the end and there are plenty of elements for it,' emphasises Zanin.

At another point, lawyers are calling for an independent and impartial trial 'so that there is independence from public opinion and the media. Anything that doesn't refer to compliance with the law should not be taken into account,' they say.

For Teixeira, the process follows a completely political rather than a judicial logic. The accusations lack materiality. There is a joint action of the Judicial Branch with parts of the Brazilian media, in the sense of demonizing the former president, almost a psychological illusionism. It's a legal war to delegitimize the enemy.

Our position is that these condemnations can never prevail. Our position is firm and in none of the trials has any proof of guilt been presented,' the lawyers stress.

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