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Swedish court rejects request to detain Assange in absence over rape allegation

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A Swedish court has struck down a prosecutor's request to detain Julian Assange in absentia over outstanding rape allegations. The case was reopened after the WikiLeaks founder was hauled from London's Ecuadorian embassy.

The court decided pre-trial detention for Assange would not be "*proportionate*," said Swedish Deputy Director of Public Prosecution Eva-Marie Persson at a press conference Monday, but added the investigation could still proceed without it.

The ruling was handed down Monday by a judge in a court in Uppsala, north of Stockholm.

Swedish prosecutors reopened the rape case earlier this month, soon after Assange was jailed for skipping a 2012 bail hearing. Assange requested Monday's hearing be postponed, citing ill health, but the request was denied.

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Detaining Assange in absence would have allowed Sweden to issue an arrest warrant on him, but for now the European warrant already issued will have to suffice for the investigators, the Swedish judge said.

Assange was arrested in mid-April after spending over six years under political asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London.

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