



Portugal Court Denies US Extradition Request for Longtime US Fugitive George Wright

McNabb Associates, P.C. (U.S. Extradition Attorneys)

Submitted at 10:41 AM November 17, 2011



Portuguese court has denied a U.S. request for the extradition of captured American fugitive George Wright, his lawyer said Thursday.

The U.S. wants Wright returned to serve the rest of his 15- to 30-year jail sentence for a 1962 killing in New Jersey. Wright was captured in Portugal in September after more than four decades on the run.

Wright's lawyer, Manuel Luis Ferreira, told The Associated Press by telephone the court rejected the U.S. bid.

Ferreira said the judge accepted his arguments that Wright is now Portuguese and that the statute of limitations on the killing had expired. He declined to provide further details, saying he would speak to the media later in the day.

The U.S. Department of Justice, which can appeal the decision to a higher Portuguese court, did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

Portuguese court proceedings for extraditions and many other type of cases are conducted in secrecy with no public access to the proceedings, filings or decisions.

Court officials contacted by telephone Thursday said the only judge who is authorized to divulge details of the ruling, Luis Neves, was traveling outside of Portugal

and he did not immediately return a message left with his secretary seeking comment.

Wright spent seven years in a U.S. prison for the New Jersey murder before escaping in 1970, and was on the run for 41 years until his arrest.

Wright has been under house arrest for the past four weeks at his home near Lisbon, wearing an electronic tag that monitors his movements. He had initially been held in a Lisbon jail.

Wright was captured in the seaside village where he has lived since 1993 after authorities matched his fingerprint on a Portuguese identity card to one in the U.S.

Ferreira previously told The AP he would argue Wright is now a Portuguese citizen and should be allowed to serve the remainder of his sentence in Portugal, where his wife and two grown children live.

Wright got Portuguese citizenship through his 1991 marriage to a Portuguese woman and after Guinea-Bissau, a former Portuguese colony in West Africa, gave him the new name of "Jose Luis Jorge dos Santos" complete with fake names for parents and made him a citizen.

The identity from Guinea-Bissau was granted after the country gave Wright political asylum in the 1980s, and that was accepted by Portugal when it granted him citizenship, according to his lawyer.

Wright broke out of Bayside State Prison in Leesburg, New Jersey, on Aug. 19, 1970.

In 1972, Wright — dressed as a priest and using an alias —

hijacked a Delta flight from Detroit to Miami along with others, police say.

After releasing the plane's 86 other passengers for a \$1 million ransom, the hijackers forced the plane to fly to Boston, then to Algeria, where the hijackers sought asylum.

Wright met his future wife, Maria do Rosario Valente, in Lisbon in 1978. The couple moved in the early 1980s to Guinea-Bissau where Wright lived openly using his real name and socialized with U.S. diplomats and embassy personnel who told The AP they were unaware of his past.

His wife also did translation work for years for the U.S. Embassy in Bissau. They lived there until they moved back to Portugal in 1993.

This article is published by Associated Press on November 17, 2011.

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The author of this blog is Douglas McNabb. Please feel free to contact him directly at mcnabb@mcnabbassociates.com or at one of the offices listed above.

Guatemala Leader Authorizes

Extradition of Ex-Pres

McNabb Associates, P.C. (U.S. Extradition Attorneys)

Submitted at 11:56 AM November 17, 2011



Guatemalan President Alvaro Colom said Tuesday he will grant a U.S. extradition request for former president Alfonso Portillo, who faces U.S. charges of money laundering related to the alleged embezzlement of \$1.5 million in foreign donations.

Colom said the country's courts have already approved the extradition of Portillo, and that he will respect those rulings.

"The president should not get mixed up in the decisions of judges and justices," Colom said. The country's highest court approved the extradition request in August.

Speaking at a news conference, Colom did not give a date for when Portillo might be sent north. The remaining administrative processes can take months before the extradition finally occurs.

In a statement, the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala said it "welcomes the decision of President Alvaro Colom and the government of Guatemala to promote justice and security."

"The Guatemalan authorities have sent a clear message that nobody is above the law," the statement said.

In May, a Guatemalan court found Portillo not guilty of charges that he stole \$15 million from the country's Defense Department when he governed the country from 2000 to 2004.

The judges ruled that prosecutors failed to prove through documents or witnesses that Portillo was personally involved in embezzling the funds.

Portillo is charged in a New York federal court with money laundering and embezzling \$1.5 million donated by Taiwan to buy schoolbooks for Guatemalan children. He allegedly deposited the money in Miami and transferred it to a Paris account in the name of his ex-wife and daughter.

After leaving office in 2004, Portillo fled to Mexico where he received a work visa and was a financial adviser for a construction materials company.

He was extradited from Mexico to Guatemala in 2008 to face the embezzlement charges at home and remained free until he was arrested on Jan. 26, 2010 on the U.S. extradition request. He was captured at a beach preparing to flee Guatemala by boat.

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Mexico Seeks to Extradite US Weapons Suspects

McNabb Associates, P.C. (U.S. Extradition Attorneys)

Submitted at 12:16 PM November 17, 2011

Mexico's attorney general has asked the United States to extradite six people suspected of providing guns to drug cartels in Mexico.

"As a sovereign state, Mexico has the freedom to punish those who violate its law by introducing weapons on its territory," Marisela Morales told Congress Wednesday.

The extradition requests concern three citizens or residents of California and three others in Texas, Morales said.

Two other US citizens were under investigation in Mexico on similar charges.

Mexico has long criticized the role of US-bought weapons in its raging drug violence, which has left some 45,000 dead since 2006.

The extradition request came amid anger in Mexico over a US operation called "Fast and Furious" under which US officials followed suspect buyers of guns heading to Mexico instead of immediately arresting them, between 2009 and 2010.

According to a US congressional report in July, an estimated 2,000 weapons smuggled into Mexico in the operation have been linked to violence and killings, including that of a US federal agent.

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Everett, Washington Man Agrees to Extradition to Face War Crimes Trial in Bosnia

McNabb Associates, P.C. (U.S. Extradition Attorneys)

Submitted at 12:31 PM November 17, 2011

A Washington state man who came to the United States in 2001 has agreed to return to Bosnia to face a war crimes trial.

Edin Dzeko of Everett appeared in federal court Tuesday in Seattle for the extradition hearing.

He's accused of being a member of a Bosnian execution squad that killed Croat civilians and disarmed soldiers captured by Bosnian forces in 1993 during the civil war in the former Yugoslavia.

The 39-year-old Dzeko told the judge he is eager to go back to Bosnia and clear his name.

The Daily Herald reports more than 30 of Dzeko's friends and relatives exchanged smiles and thumbs-up with him in the courtroom. If convicted he faces 10 years in prison.

After coming to the United States, Dzeko became a U.S. citizen. He worked as groundskeeper at naval facilities in Everett until his arrest in April.

This article was published by Associated Press on November 16, 2011.

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Suspect in Killings May go Free in Ecuador

McNabb Associates, P.C. (U.S. Extradition Attorneys)

Submitted at 12:52 PM November 17, 2011

Countries at odds over where to prosecute him.

Ecuadoran officials have warned the US government that a man accused of killing a young mother and her son in Brockton could go free in six months unless Plymouth County prosecutors send evidence to try him in Ecuador for the alleged crimes.

The South American nation's Oct. 31 letter to the US Department of Justice follows months of emotional debate between the two countries over where to prosecute Luis A. Guaman, a 41-year-old roofer indicted on charges in the February bludgeoning deaths of Maria Avelina Palaguachi and her 2-year-old son, Brian.

Guaman fled to his native Ecuador using a false passport hours after the bodies were found in a trash bin. Ecuadoran officials soon arrested him and prosecuted

him for the document fraud, but he completed his prison sentence last month. Although the Ecuadoran constitution forbids extradition of its own citizens, prosecutors have repeatedly said they would try him for the killings in Ecuador if the United States would send evidence.

Before Guaman could be released, an Ecuadoran prosecutor persuaded the Third Criminal Court of Cuenca on Oct. 14 to keep him in jail for six more months to gather evidence. If the United States fails to send evidence, the government said, it will be impossible to prosecute him.

"We want to see him brought to justice," an Ecuadoran government spokesman said yesterday, declining to be named because the matter is being handled through diplomatic channels. "She was an Ecuadoran national and she and her son were murdered. We want to see justice done."

Plymouth County officials have refused to send evidence and have called on US officials to intensify pressure on Ecuador to extradite him to the United States, where he would face stiffer penalties if convicted, such as life in prison, compared with a maximum of 25 years in Ecuador.

Yesterday, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz again rejected the request to send evidence. Cruz said he believes that, despite the constitutional ban, Ecuador could use a preexisting extradition treaty with the United States to send Guaman to Massachusetts.

"My position remains the same. This is not their case," said Cruz, who had not seen the letter. "This has nothing to do with Ecuador except that this is where this man fled."

Cruz, who has called for the United States to consider economic and trade sanctions against Ecuador unless officials turn over Guaman, pointed to Guaman's passport-fraud prosecution as an example of

judicial uncertainty in Ecuador. Prosecutors had said that Guaman could face several years in jail for the crime, but instead he was sentenced to a few months.

Cruz said he should be prosecuted where the crime occurred.

"I am very confident that we will convict him," Cruz said. "He will get life and he will do life."

Relatives of the victims say they want Guaman to be prosecuted in Massachusetts because the penalties are stiffer here.

"We want him to come back here, because the crimes happened here," said a sister of Maria Avelina, Maria Eloisa Palaguachi, who still lives down the street from where the bodies were found.

But they are fearful that he will instead be released.

"Don't let him out," said Maria Emilia Palaguachi, another sister who lives in Brockton. "The elderly people are alone there. What are they going to do? . . . They're afraid he's going to get out."

Guaman had shared an apartment with Maria Avelina, her partner, her son, and another man to save money on rent. The circumstances of the killings remain unclear, but a housemate allegedly heard them arguing before she was killed.

After his return to Ecuador, police there found and arrested Guaman because he allegedly threatened to kill his in-laws unless his estranged wife sent him money. His wife alerted authorities, who arrested him when he went to pick up the money.

Yesterday, Manuel Tenezaca, who is married to Maria Emilia, said the family is grasping for answers nine months after the deaths. Days after the killings, the family suffered a third loss when Tenezaca's adult son fell from a roof he was working on and died. His father said he usually watched out for him, but was busy making funeral arrangements for the others.

Now Tenezaca said he is hoping to visit Ecuador, and wants to confront Guaman in jail.

"I want to ask him why did you do this?" he said. "Why?"

This article was written by Maria Sacchetti and published by The Boston Globe on November 16, 2011.

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