

# Ecuador Tells Julian Assange His Citizenship Has Been Revoked

Assange's onetime hosts have now severed any remaining ties with the WikiLeaks founder, who is fighting extradition to the U.S. [Gizmodo](#)

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*Julian Assange's long, contentious relationship with Ecuador is officially over: According to [Associated Press](#), the nation has chosen to revoke his citizenship effective immediately.*

The WikiLeaks founder famously took refuge in the Ecuadorian embassy in London in 2012 after Swedish prosecutors issued an international arrest warrant (later dropped) on counts of rape and sexual misconduct, saying that the case was a pretext to extradite him to the U.S. on espionage charges. Ecuador granted Assange—who had leaked troves of U.S. military, intelligence, and diplomatic secrets via WikiLeaks—political asylum and later citizenship. Official Ecuadorian citizenship was intended to pave the way for Assange to assume a diplomatic role with immunity to prosecution, but the relationship reportedly soured as Assange proved a frustrating, expensive, and politically inconvenient guest over the course of his seven-year stretch in the embassy.

Ecuadorian officials enraged that Assange was continuing to operate WikiLeaks from within the embassy (including [leaking files](#) stemming from a hack of Democratic Party servers during the U.S. presidential election in 2016) cut off his [internet access in 2018](#) and [stripped him of asylum status](#) in 2019, allowing police to enter and take him into custody. Since then, Assange has been [convicted of bail evasion](#) in the UK and spent much of his time desperately trying to avoid extradition to the U.S., which is [seeking revenge](#) for the humiliating leaks by slapping him with a slew of hacking and espionage charges.

Assange won the initial round, citing the near certainty he would be tortured by solitary confinement in U.S. custody like [WikiLeaks source Chelsea Manning](#), but the U.S. government is appealing the decision. Assange's case has raised serious issues about freedom of the press and whether his activities should be protected by the [First Amendment](#). But don't worry, the U.S. has [pinky sworn](#) not to do the whole torture thing so long as nothing happens that causes it to change its mind and has issued assurances that he could potentially serve his sentence in Australia that are [full of legal](#) caveats.

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In another blow, albeit one which will have little practical impact on Assange's fate moving forward, Ecuadorean officials now appear to have decided there were irregularities in the WikiLeaks founder's naturalization process.

The [Guardian reported](#) that in a letter filed in response to a claim by the Ecuadorean foreign ministry, the Pichincha court for contentious administrative matters has confirmed that Assange's naturalization has been annulled. Issues cited by Ecuadorean authorities included inconsistencies and different signatures in naturalization documents, unpaid fees, and the implication some paperwork may have been modified, the paper wrote.

A likely factor in the about-face is that Assange was originally granted citizenship under the tenure of ex-President Rafael Correa. His successor, Lenín Moreno, made a [hard break with Correa's legacy](#), including by evicting Assange and turning him over to UK police. Moreno's successor, in turn, right-wing politician Guillermo Lasso, had also called for the [removal of Assange](#), highlighting how his tenure in the embassy and general relationship with Ecuador had become a political liability.

As the [Register](#) noted, Ecuador has shown almost no public support whatsoever for Assange during his current extradition proceedings in the UK. In fact, the opposite has occurred, as Ecuador reportedly cataloged Assange's possessions and [shared troves of data](#) with U.S. prosecutors despite the ongoing nature of the extradition fight.

According to the [Guardian](#), Ecuador's foreign ministry denied that political pressure played a role in the decision to axe Assange's citizenship and that it "acted independently and followed due process in a case that took place during the previous government and that was raised by the same previous government."

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