
U.S. judge delays extradition of Carlos Ghosn's accused escape plotters to Japan

2020/10/30 10:07 στην κατηγορία INTERNATIONAL

A federal judge on Thursday granted a last-minute request to stop the U.S. government from turning over to Japan two men accused of helping smuggle former Nissan Motor Co Chairman Carlos Ghosn out of the country while he was awaiting trial on financial crimes.

U.S. District Judge Indira Talwani in Boston granted a request by lawyers for U.S. Army Special Forces veteran Michael Taylor and his son, Peter Taylor, to delay the transfer shortly before the two men were set to be placed on a flight to Japan.

The State Department informed them Wednesday it had approved Japan's extradition request. Talwani put on hold their transfer while she reviewed the Taylors' emergency petition challenging that decision.

The department's decision came after the Taylors lost an earlier court challenge to their potential extradition following their arrests in May

In a joint statement, two lawyers for the Taylors, Ty Cobb and Paul Kelly, said they were actively seeking to have the State Department and White House reconsider the decision authorizing the surrender of their clients.

"It would be a great injustice for these two U.S. citizens to be surrendered to Japan," they said.

The State Department and White House declined comment.

Prosecutors say the Taylors facilitated a "brazen" escape in which Ghosn fled Japan on Dec. 29, 2019, hidden in a box and on a private jet before reaching Lebanon, his childhood home, which has no extradition treaty with Japan.

Ghosn was awaiting trial on charges that he engaged in financial wrongdoing, including by understating his compensation in Nissan's financial statements. Ghosn denies wrongdoing.

Prosecutors said the elder Taylor, a private security specialist, and his son received \$1.3 million for their services.

Their lawyers previously argued they could not be extradited because Japanese penal code does not make it a crime to help someone “bail jump.”

(Reuters)