

US couple accused of abuse are hopeful

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SAO PAULO, Brazil --

The U.S. couple accused of sexually abusing minors at a nudist colony in Brazil are hopeful they will be cleared and released, though Brazilian authorities were awarded more time to investigate them, their lawyer said Monday.

A judge extended the warrants for Frederic Calvin Louderback, 63, of San Diego and Barbara Anner, 72, from Georgia, until Wednesday after police requested more time to compile evidence against the couple.

Louderback is accused of abusing at least 10 boys between the ages of 6 and 14, all from poor neighborhoods near the nudist colony, according to police. Anner is alleged to have lured the boys with promises of gifts, food and trips.

"They remain stunned by the whole situation but are extremely confident that they will be released soon and that everything will be straightened out," said Vitor Peruchin, one of the couple's lawyers.

Louderback and Anner deny all the accusations and said they were set up by wealthy members of the nudist colony who didn't like their work for the poor. The Americans ran an organization that gave free English lessons to children in the region and also promoted sports activities and donated products to poor families.

"We have been talking to residents of the local community and we are gathering more and more evidence showing that they were set up," Peruchin said. "They are very optimistic."

Authorities already have testimony from the minors, "but we are still waiting for the analysis on the items we seized," police inspector Juliano Ferreira said by telephone.

Authorities raided the Colonia do Sol nudist colony in the state of Rio Grande do Sul last Tuesday and also arrested two Brazilians, including Andre Herdy, president of the Brazilian Nudism Federation. They also denied the charges.