

“Set Julian Assange Free”

Appeal to the Swedish government

The whistle blower website Wikileaks’ founder Julian Assange is detained in the British high-security prison Belmarsh. His health is in a critical condition. We, the signatories of this appeal, fear for his life and mental health due to the treatment he is exposed to. We demand his immediate release, respect for his fundamental human rights, a fair and transparent judicial treatment and protection against extradition to USA.

The United Nations’ Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, Nils Melzer, visited Julian Assange in prison on 9 May 2019 with a group of medical doctors. They concluded that Assange showed "all symptoms that are typical consequences of prolonged mental torture."

We are deeply alarmed by the UN findings concerning Assange’s state of health and of the legal proceedings he has been subjected to, in particular by the Swedish police from 2010 and onwards.

Assange was arrested for breach of bail in the UK, an act which is not a crime, as he feared extradition to Sweden for accusations of rape raised by the Swedish police. Melzer holds that Assange subsequent fear of extradition to Sweden and then further to the US was well founded.

The UN report argues that this and a number of other serious breaches of law may have been carried out by the authorities during the process against Assange. Sweden has, since it started this ball to roll, under the Protection from torture treaty (CAT) a responsibility also for the pain inflicted upon Assange in Belmarsh and Britain. The Swedish prosecutor and police have refused to respond to claims presented in letter of 12 September 2019. Not to respond to the Melzer/UN report and the serious accusations it presents is unacceptable. It undermines the authority of the United Nations. And the public is entitled to this information if respect for judicial institutions is to be upheld.

We, the signatories of this appeal, find the report by the United Nations rapporteur on torture and of the UN’s office on arbitrary detention deeply alarming.

We demand the immediate release of Julian Assange from British prison and that he be granted asylum in Sweden or another country of his choice, guaranteed not to be extradited to the US. The present coronavirus threat aggravates the situation even further and makes his release even more pressing.

We further demand that the Swedish ministry of justice respond to the allegations brought forth by the said UN authorities and instruct appropriate Swedish legal action be taken for

- a full and transparent investigation into a possible disappearance of documents, alleged by the UN report, in order to clarify if/or to what extent illegal destruction of evidence and perversion of the course of justice has taken place

- a full and transparent investigation into why the case against Assange has been stretched out over years when Swedish law sets a strict limit of months for such proceedings

- a full and transparent investigation into the nature of co-operation between Swedish and British police with the alleged aim of conducting extra-legal arrest, harassment and detention of Julian Assange and with the possible aim of extraditing him to a third country

- that Sweden respect the United Nations by fulfilling its obligations to inter alia the following international treaties, of which it is a signatory state: The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT, ratified 1986); the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR, ratified 1971); International Law Commission, The International Wrongful Act of A State (ILC/IWAS).

We finally demand

that Julian Assange be given a fair treatment in accordance with principles of basic human rights and the rule of law and that any wrongdoing against him brought about by representatives of the Swedish authorities be rectified and fully compensated for in accordance with Swedish law.