



The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
A.Albanese.MP@aph.gov.au

Senator the Hon Penny Wong
Minister for Foreign Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
foreign.minister@dfat.gov.au

20 June 2022

Dear Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs,

The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance urgently asks you to intervene on behalf of Julian Assange after the UK Home Secretary determined the United States could extradite Assange to face charges of espionage. If convicted he could be jailed for up to 175 years.

The WikiLeaks publisher has been a journalist member of MEAA since 2007. He carries an International Federation of Journalists' press card.

The decision to uphold extradition to the US imperils journalism everywhere. We urge the Australian government to call on our nation's traditionally close relationship with the US to advocate that the charges be dropped, which would allow Assange to be released from prison and reunited with his family.

It's important to note that media outlets around the world worked with WikiLeaks to publish the same material for which he is being punished. In November 2010, Australia's *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age*, *The Guardian* in the UK, *The New York Times* in the US, *El Pais* in Spain, *Le Monde* in France and *Der Spiegel* in Germany collaborated with WikiLeaks in the name of public interest journalism, to expose what governments were doing on behalf of their citizens.

None of these media outlets, their publishers or editors, are being pursued by the US government; Assange alone is being pursued.

If Assange is extradited under the US Department of Justice charges, it would be a dangerous step; a frightening assault on the public's right to know. It would mean that any journalist, anywhere in the world, could be charged and extradited for handling any information that the US government classifies as "secret".

Prime Minister, Australia must intervene to prevent an Australian citizen from dying in a US prison for revealing information in the public interest.

📍 PO Box 723 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 📞 1300 656 513

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A precedent has already been established when former President Obama commuted the sentence of Chelsea Manning, the original source of the material published by Wikileaks in 2010.

We urge you to engage with President Biden to end this pursuit of Julian Assange and allow him to be released to join his wife and children.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Percy', written in a cursive style.

Karen Percy
Federal President
MEAA Media Section