

The Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson  
10 Downing St,  
London SW1A 2AB

20 April 2022

Dear Mr. Johnson,

Re: The life or death of Julian Assange and our Western democracy

Today is the day when the Westminster Magistrate Court will issue the documents to extradite Mr. Assange to the United States. These will be submitted to the Home Secretary for her final decision and signature. We are addressing this letter to you as concerned citizens from Austria who followed the Assange case from the very beginning, but more particularly since the British authorities dragged him out of the Ecuadorian Embassy.

We then watched as the judge sentenced him with the harshest sentence ever meted out for jumping bail when he sought asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy. A sentence of 50 weeks! We noted with astonishment that the judge (Lady Arbuthnot) had a conflict of interest and did not withdraw from the case. In our eyes, this was already a sign that did not bode well for Mr. Assange's extradition process since the lawyers' objections were just ignored. As regards to his sentence and the fact that he was sent to Her Majesty's Prison of Belmarsh, the harshest prison in the UK, we cannot help but wonder why a journalist and publisher is sentenced to time in that prison! It just boggles the mind!

Needless to say we could go into details and provide you with our perception of the case, but, for brevity's sake, and since you are yourself surely aware of the issues we could raise, we will only raise the findings of the UN's Special Rapporteur on Torture whose report was totally ignored by the Government of the UK. Is the function of this Rapporteur established only to apply to so-called totalitarian countries and not in our "democracies"? All governments, all members of the UN, have a duty to care for the respect of human rights and they should thus all abide by the principles themselves. The double standards that are applied here are intolerable.

We watched the whole procedure in the Magistrate's Court and we would just like to point out that they reflected very badly on the British system of justice which we so far had believed to be a shining example of fairness and justice. Suffice it to say as regards to the Magistrate's Court that Judge Baraitser was extremely accommodating towards the American side of the aisle and highly antagonistic regarding issues raised by Mr. Assange's lawyers. We have written

to Ms. Patel on the matter and will therefore not go into the same details in this letter. There are however two major points that must be mentioned.

In the summer of last year, Mr. Thordarson, key witness of the prosecution, admitted to having lied to the FBI about Mr. Assange having hacked or requested him to hack into computer systems. That point alone should have set Mr. Assange free. The next item that was made known was that about 30 people working or previously working in the intelligence agencies had revealed that the CIA had plotted to kidnap and/or kill Mr. Assange whilst he was in the Embassy, including the possibility of a shoot-out in the streets of London.

And then came the fatal decision of the High Court to accept diplomatic assurances of a country that had plotted to kill Mr. Assange, read out on Human Rights' Day, of all days. Would that not be a further ground for rejecting his extradition? No matter the allegations of the USA as stated in the indictment against Mr. Assange, the whole world believes he is a political prisoner. Furthermore, he is a journalist and publisher. If the lies of the key witness did not set Mr. Assange free, plotting to kill him should have.

As a journalist yourself whose duty it was to inform the public, how would you have reacted had you been "persecuted" for truthful information? One of the allegations spread against Mr. Assange is that he had endangered lives. However, he was not the one to have published neither "the code" nor the "names". He actually tried to work with the then US Secretary of State to minimize the damage caused by others. His offer for assistance was rejected or rather ignored. Furthermore, a representative of the Pentagon stated in Chelsea Manning's trial that they could not provide evidence of harm to anyone.

In the eyes of the world, Julian Assange is a political prisoner kept in Belmarsh instead of in freedom, like was the case for Mr. Pinochet whose extradition had been requested by Spain for, among others, crimes against humanity.

Thus, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Prime Minister, our plea to you is to do the only thing possible: don't let yourself become an instrument in the revenge case against Mr. Assange. Please stand for the truth and don't extradite Julian Assange!

Respectfully yours,

for Candles4Assange Vienna