

Joint appeal by IALANA Germany and IPPNW Germany:

Julian Assange is now facing deportation every day! We demand his immediate release. The German government must speak plainly to President Biden.

In the process by which the US is demanding the extradition of Julian Assange to stand trial under the Espionage Act, legal recourse in the British courts is almost exhausted. The High Court's decision on the appeal in the final instance is imminent. Should Assange fail here as well, the way would be clear for the British Home Secretary Suella Braverman to fly Assange out to the USA immediately.

Assange's lawyers can appeal to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, but this has no suspensive effect. However, if an additional application for provisional measures under Article 39 of the ECtHR's Rules of Procedure is successful, the ECtHR can provisionally suspend Assange's extradition to the US in order to ensure effective legal protection through the main proceedings.

However, it remains to be seen whether the British government would comply with an order by the ECtHR to suspend the deportation. This is because Minister Bravermann is acting in favour of Britain's withdrawal from the ECHR.

For more than a decade, Assange has sought to avoid extradition to the US, where he faces an unfair trial, a virtual life sentence and indefinite solitary confinement. According to medical examinations, Assange shows all the signs of psychological torture and suffers particularly from solitary

confinement in Belmarsh. If deportation were to occur, there would be an increased risk of suicide. The prospect of never being released and dying in detention would rob Assange of any hope, even if the prison authorities waive additional "supermax standards" and "Special Administrative Measures" (SAMS), which they only promised on appeal on the condition that Assange's behaviour would not make such measures necessary after all.

The international peace movement and civil society owe Assange a debt of gratitude: his revelations about war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan, for example, supported the pressure on the US government to end the war. Assange's motto: "If wars can be started by lies, peace can be started by truth."

Great danger also exists for the freedom of the investigative press, should the proceedings against Assange continue. While he was vice president under Obama, Biden rejected steps against Assange and WikiLeaks because otherwise, in addition to WikiLeaks, five international newspapers, including the New York Times, which had also published the secret material leaked by Chelsea Manning, would also have had to be charged. In November 2022, the five jointly called on the US government to stop prosecuting Assange in an open letter. They stressed: never before had the anti-espionage law been used to put publishers or journalists on trial. "This indictment

sets a dangerous precedent, and threatens to undermine America's First Amendment and the freedom of the press. Holding governments accountable is part of the core mission of a free press in a democracy. Obtaining and disclosing sensitive information when necessary in the public interest is a core part of the daily work of journalists. If that work is criminalised, our public discourse and our democracies are made significantly weaker."

Despite widespread international protests from human rights groups and journalist organisations, most recently including the Australian government, the US government under President Biden is showing itself intransigent and continuing Trump's line.

Annalena Baerbock is now particularly in the spotlight, as she demanded the immediate release of Assange before the change of government, citing "serious violations" of "fundamental freedoms under the European Convention on Human Rights". Where is her usual strong protest against this massive attack on press freedom?

We call on the German government, for the sake of press freedom and to save the journalist Assange, who was unjustly prosecuted for publishing information leaked to him, to protest in clear terms to US President Biden against the threatened extradition and to demand the end of the criminal proceedings against Assange.

IALANA Germany – German Aiifiliate of the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms
www.ialana.de | info@ialana.de

IPPNW Germany – International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War / Physicians in Social Responsibility | German Affiliate
www.ippnw.de | kontakt@ippnw.de

