

They Call for Assange's Immediate Release: Heads of state, prime ministers, parliamentarians, members of Congress, ... demand Assange be set free

Thirteen Former Presidents Urge United Kingdom Government to Immediately Free Julian Assange.

By [Lawyers for Assange](#)

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Region: [Europe](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Media Disinformation](#)

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As Julian Assange fights U.S. extradition at the Old Bailey in London, over one hundred eminent political figures, including 13 past and present heads of state, numerous ministers, members of parliament and diplomats, have today denounced the illegality of the proceedings and appealed for Assange's immediate release.

The politicians from 27 different countries and from across the political spectrum have joined 189 independent international lawyers, judges, legal academics and lawyers' associations by endorsing their [open letter](#) to the UK Government warning that the U.S. extradition request and extradition proceedings violate national and international law, breach fair trial rights and other human rights, and threaten press freedom and democracy.

Politicians endorsing the call to free Julian Assange include Jeremy Corbyn, former Prime Minister of Spain, Luis Zapatero, several members of the European Parliament, former presidents of Brazil, Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff, and Australian parliamentarians from the cross-party parliamentary group to free Assange.

Kenneth MacAskill, Member of UK Parliament, former Justice Secretary of Scotland, and lawyer, commented, "This is a political crucifixion not legal process and is about seeking to bury truth and those exposing it."

The unprecedented appeal to the UK government by the international political community follows concerns raised by Amnesty International, the Council of Europe, The American Civil Liberties Union, Reporters Without Borders, Human Rights Watch, and numerous other rights organisations regarding the chilling effect Assange's prosecution will have on press freedom. Amnesty International's petition calling for the U.S. Government to drop its charges against Assange has garnered over 400,000 signatures.

Today marks the beginning of the third week of the extradition hearings, which have drawn wide criticism for failing to uphold the principle of open justice by preventing independent observers including from Amnesty International, PEN Norway and others from monitoring the trial.

The Trump administration is seeking Mr Assange's extradition from the UK to prosecute him under the Espionage Act for his work as a journalist and publisher. The 2010 publications, on which the U.S. government's attempted prosecution is based, brought to light a range of public interest information, including evidence of U.S. war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Last week during the hearing the court heard that Julian Assange and *WikiLeaks* undertook careful redaction processes to protect informants, that no informants are known to have been harmed by their publications, and that Julian Assange and *WikiLeaks* were not responsible for publishing un-redacted cables. Nevertheless, the prosecution asserted the right of the U.S. to prosecute all journalists and all media who publish classified information.

Quotes:

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil (2003-2010), Honorary citizen of the City of Paris (2020), Nobel Prize Nominee (2018):

"If the democrats of the planet Earth, including all journalists, all lawyers, all unionists and all politicians, have no courage to express themselves in defence of Assange, so that he is not extradited, it means we have a lot of democrats out there who are liars. Assange should be perceived as a hero of democracy. He does not deserve to be punished. I hope the people of the UK, the people of France, the people of the United States will not allow this atrocity. As was the knee of a policeman killing a black man, this will be the knees of millions of governors from around the world suffocating Assange so that he dies. And we do not have the right to allow that."

Andrew Wilkie MP, Independent Member for Clark and Co-Chair of the Bring Julian Assange Home Parliamentary Group:

"Julian Assange is being politically persecuted for publishing information that was in the public interest, including hard evidence of U.S. war crimes. That the perpetrator of those war crimes, America, is now seeking to extradite Mr Assange is unjust in the extreme and arguably illegal under British law. If it goes ahead, not only would Mr Assange face 175 years in prison, but the precedent would be set for all Australians, and particularly journalists, that they are at risk of being extradited to any country they offend."

Mikuláš Peksa, Member of European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy:

"Freedom of speech remains a crucial value in the beginning of the 21st century. Despite it sometimes revealing inconvenient truths, we shall do our best to protect it."

Open Letter: <http://www.lawyersforassange.org/en/open-letter.html>

Political endorsements: <http://www.lawyersforassange.org/en/endorsements.html>

Legal signatories: <https://www.lawyersforassange.org/en/signatories-all.html>

Contact: lawyers4assange@protonmail.com

Full list of political endorsements:

Heads of State



1. **Alberto Fernández**, President of Argentina (2019), lawyer, Professor of Criminal Law (University of Buenos Aires), former Chief of the Cabinet of Ministers, adviser to Deliberative Council of Buenos Aires and the Argentine Chamber of Deputies, deputy director of Legal Affairs of the Economy Ministry, *Argentina*
2. **Cristina Fernández de Kirchner**, Vice President of Argentina (2019), President of Argentina (2007-2015), lawyer, *Argentina*
3. **Dilma Rousseff**, President of Brazil (2011-2016), economist, former Minister of Energy and former Chief of Staff of the Presidency of the Republic, *Brazil*
4. **Ernesto Samper**, President of Colombia (1994-1998), lawyer, economist, former Secretary General of UNASUR, Senator of the Republic and Minister of Economic Development, Ambassador of Colombia in Spain, *Colombia*
5. **Evo Morales Ayma**, President of Bolivia (2006-2019), trade unionist, activist and Bolivian leader of Aymara descent, President of the Six Federations of the Tropic of Cochabamba, Former President pro tempore of UNASUR and CELAC, *Bolivia*
6. **Fernando Lugo**, President of Paraguay (2008-2012) Senator, Roman Catholic priest and bishop, *Paraguay*
7. **José Luis Zapatero**, Prime Minister of Spain (2004-2011), lawyer, Professor of Constitutional Law at the Faculty of Law of the University of León, former Deputy in General Courts by Madrid, deputy in General Courts of Spain, president of the Council of the European Union, *Spain*
8. **José (Pepe) Mujica**, President of Uruguay (2010-2015) Former Deputy, Senator and Minister of Livestock Agriculture and Fisheries, *Uruguay*
9. **Leonel Fernandez**, President of the Dominican Republic (1996-2012), lawyer, president of the EU-LAC Foundation, president of the World Federation of United Nations Associations, Professor at Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) and Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, *Dominican Republic*
10. **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva**, President of Brazil (2003-2010), Honorary citizen of the City of Paris (2020), Nobel Prize Nominee (2018), *Brazil*

11. **Martín Torrijos**, President of the Republic of Panama (2004-2009), political scientist and economist, *Panama*
12. **Nicolas Maduro Moros**, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, *Venezuela*
13. **Rafael Correa**, President of Ecuador (2007-2017), former Minister for the Economy, Professor of Economics, *Ecuador*

Ministers, Diplomats and Politicians

14. **Álvaro García Linera**, Vice President of Bolivia (2006-2019), mathematician, academic, *Bolivia*



15. **Jeremy Corbyn**, Labour Member of Parliament (since 1983), Leader of the Labour Party and Leader of the Opposition (2015-2020), *United Kingdom*
16. **John McDonnell**, Member of Parliament (since 1997), Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer (2015-2020), *United Kingdom*
17. **Andrew Wilkie**, MP, Independent Federal Member for Clark, *Australia*
18. **Gregor Golobic**, philosopher, former Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, former Secretary General of Liberal Democracy party, former president of Zares party, advisor to former President of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr. Janez Drnovšek, *Slovenia*
19. **Arthur Chesterfield-Evans** M.B.,B.S., F.R.C.S.(Eng.), M.Appl.Sci. (OHS), M.Pol.Sci. Ex-Member of Legislative Council New South Wales Parliament, *Australia*
20. **Ögmundur Jónasson**, former Icelandic Minister of Interior, *Iceland*
21. **Ron Paul**, Former U.S. Congressman from Texas, *USA*
22. **Peter Whish-Wilson**, Australian Greens, Senator for Tasmania, *Australia*
23. **Jožef Škol**, political scientist, former Minister of Culture, former State Secretary for Culture, first president of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS), former head of Liberal Democracy, former President of the National Assembly, *Slovenia*
24. **Prof. Slavoj Žižek**, philosopher, sociologist, psychologist, psychoanalyst, theologian, politician and cultural critic, author, former member of the Liberal Democratic Party and its candidate for the presidency of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia (1990), *Slovenia*

25. **Carlo Sommaruga**, lawyer, Member of Swiss Parliament, Conseiller aux Etats, *Switzerland*
26. **Patrick Breyer**, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, *Germany*
27. **Marketa Gregorova**, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-Chair of the delegation to the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, *Czech Republic*
28. **Mikuláš Peksa**, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, biophysicist, *Czech Republic*
29. **Yanis Varoufakis**, Member of the Hellenic Parliament for Athens B, Minister of Finance (2015), former Secretary-General of MeRA25, economist, academic, philosopher, *Greece*
30. **Spomenka Hribar**, author, philosopher, sociologist, politician, columnist, public intellectual, co-founder of the Slovenian Democratic Union (1989), former prominent member of the Democratic opposition of Slovenia (Demos), and key figure in the efforts for the independence and democratization of Slovenia, *Slovenia*
31. **Cédric Wermuth**, Congressman of the Nationalrat des Schweizerischen Parlaments, Vice President of the Social Democratic Party of Switzerland, *Switzerland*
32. **Enrique Fernando Santiago Romero**, Congressman, Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Spain (PCE), lawyer, *Spain*
33. **Clare Daly**, Member of the European Parliament, *Republic of Ireland*
34. **Kenneth Wright MacAskill**, Member of Parliament, Shadow SNP Spokesperson, Cabinet Secretary for Justice (2007-2014), *United Kingdom*
35. **Eleonora Evi**, Member of the European Parliament, *Italy*
36. **Francesca Businarolo**, Member of Parliament of Italy, lawyer, *Italy*
37. **Idoia Villanueva Ruiz**, Member of the European Parliament, former Senator, *Spain*
38. **Eric Bertinat**, Conseiller municipal et chef de groupe UDC Ville de Genève, Président de la commission du logement, Ancien président du Conseil municipal, *Switzerland*
39. **Ignazio Corrao**, Member of the European Parliament, member of the European Parliament Committee on Development and the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, lawyer, *Italy*
40. **Joti Brar**, Deputy Leader of the Workers Party of Britain, *United Kingdom*
41. **Gregor Gysi**, Member of Parliament of the German Bundestag, lawyer, author, moderator, *Germany*
42. **Guillaume Long**, former Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations Organization, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Culture and Heritage, Coordinating Minister of Knowledge and Human Talent, former advisor to the National Secretariat of Planning and Development of Ecuador, *France / Ecuador*

43. **Matthew Robson**, former Minister for Courts, Minister of Corrections and Disarmament, Minister for Land Information, Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Association Of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA), *New Zealand*

44. **Michel Larive**, Member of the French National Assembly, Member of the Committee for Cultural Affairs and Education, *France*

45. **Mike Gravel**, United States Senator (1969-1981), who officially released the Pentagon Papers, former Speaker of the Alaska House of Representatives, presidential candidate (2008 & 2020), *United States of America*

46. **Mirella Liuzzi**, Member of Parliament of Italy, *Italy*

47. **Piernicola Pedicini**, Member of the European Parliament, *Italy*

48. **Rosa D'Amato**, Member of the European Parliament, *Italy*

49. **Txema Guijarro García**, Member of the Congress of Deputies, Chair of the Congress' Committee on Budget, economist, *Spain*



50. **George Galloway**, leader of the Workers Party of Britain, former Member of Parliament (1987-2009 and 2013-2015), former general secretary of War on Want, writer, broadcaster, *United Kingdom*

51. **Prof. Jadranka Šturm Kocjan**, retired Professor of pedagogy and psychology, Member of Parliament (1992-1996), Ambassador in Bucharest (2010-2015), Ambassador in Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay (2015-2019), *Slovenia*

52. **Franco Juri**, geographer, journalist, publicist, author, Member of Parliament (1990-93, 2008-11), vice-president of the Zares Party (2011), Ambassador in Spain and Cuba (1993-1997), state secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1997-2000), *Slovenia*

53. **Scott Ludlam**, Senator (2008-2017), former deputy Leader of the Australian Greens, *Australia*

54. **Adriana Salvatierra**, Senator and President of the Senate of Bolivia, *Bolivia*

55. **Alberto Rodríguez Saá**, Governor of San Luis Province, lawyer, *Argentina*

56. **Alejandro Navarro**, Senator, Professor of Philosophy, *Chile*

57. **Alexandre Padilha**, Senator, Minister of Institutional Relations in the Lula

administration and Minister of Health under Dilma Rousseff, physician, *Brazil*

58. **Alicia Castro**, Argentina's Ambassador in Russia, former Argentina's Ambassador to the United Kingdom (2012- 2016), former Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela's Ambassador to the United Kingdom, *Argentina / Venezuela*

59. **Aloizio Mercadante**, former Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation Minister of Education, former Chief of Staff of the Presidency of the Republic, former Deputy and Senator, *Brazil*

60. **Andréia de Jesus Silva**, State Congresswoman of Minas Gerais State, lawyer, *Brazil*

61. **Áurea Carolina**, Federal Congressman of Minas Gerais State, political scientist, *Brazil*

62. **Beatriz Paredes**, Senator, former Ambassador of Mexico in Cuba and in Brazil, former Congresswoman and former Governor of the state of Tlaxcala, former President of the Congress of the Union, the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, *Mexico*

63. **Camilo Lagos**, National President of the Progressive Party of Chile and of the Progreso Foundation, *Chile*

64. **Carlos Alfonso Tomada**, Legislator of the City of Buenos Aires, lawyer, former Minister of Labor, Employment and Social Security, Director of the Centre for Labour and Development Studies of the National University of San Martín, *Argentina*

65. **Carlos Ominami**, former Minister of Economy, former Senator, economist, Order of the Rising Sun award-winner (Japan), *Chile*

66. **Carlos Sotelo García**, former Senator, former Undersecretary of Political Development, Secretary of Image and Propaganda Organization, Government Exercise and Electoral Action, *Mexico*

'If their case is essentially that Mr Assange broke the law by obtaining and disclosing secret information, then I struggle to see what separates him from any journalist who solicits, obtains and publishes such information. This includes the editors of the many American media outlets that reported the material...why should Mr Assange be tried, convicted and incarcerated while those who publicly release the information are afforded protection under provisions of the US constitution concerning press freedom?'

Kevin Rudd, Former Prime Minister of Australia



67. **Celso Nunez Amorim**, former Brazilian Ambassador to the United Kingdom, former Minister of Foreign Relations and former Minister of Defence, Professor of Political Science

and International Relations, *Brazil*

68. **Clara López Obregón**, former Minister of Labour, former Mayor of Bogotá and former Auditor General of the Republic, lawyer, economist, Professor at the Universidad del Rosario and Universidad de los Andes, *Colombia*

69. **Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas**, former Senator for the state of Michoacán and former Head of Government of Mexico City, *Mexico*

70. **Daniel Martínez**, former Senator of the Republic and Mayor of Montevideo, former Minister of Industry, Energy and Mining, *Uruguay*

71. **David Choquehuanca**, former Foreign Minister of Bolivia, *Bolivia*

72. **David Miranda**, Federal Congressman of Rio de Janeiro State, named by Time magazine one of the world's next generation of new leaders (2019), *Brazil*

73. **Edmilson Rodrigues**, Federal Congressman of Pará State, former Mayor of Belém, architect, *Brazil*

74. **Elizabeth Gómez Alcorta**, Minister of Women, Genders and Diversity, lawyer, Professor, Member of Consejo de la Internacional Progresista, *Argentina*

75. **Esperanza Martínez**, Senator, former Minister of Public Health and Social Welfare, *Paraguay*

76. **Fabiana Rios**, Congresswoman, former Governor of the province of Tierra del Fuego, *Argentina*

77. **Felipe Solá**, Congressman, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, former Governor of the Province of Buenos Aires, *Argentina*

78. **Fernanda Melchionna**, Federal Congressman of Rio Grande do Sul State, Leader of PSOL in the Federal Chamber of Deputies, *Brazil*

79. **Fernanda Vallejos**, Congresswoman, economist, *Argentina*

80. **Fernando Haddad**, former Minister of Education, former Mayor of São Paulo, former Chief of staff to the Finance and Economic Development Secretary of the Municipality of São Paulo and Special advisor to the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management, presidential candidate (2018), lawyer, academic, Professor of Political Science, department of the University of São Paulo, *Brazil*

81. **Ivan Valente**, Federal Congressman of São Paulo State, engineer, *Brazil*

82. **Fernando Solanas**, Argentine Ambassador to UNESCO, former National Senator, film director, screenwriter, special Honorary Golden Bear at Berlin Film Festival prize winner, *Argentina*

83. **Fidel Ernesto Naváez**, former Ecuadorian Consul and First Secretary in the United Kingdom, *Ecuador*

84. **Florencia Juana Saintout**, Congresswoman of Buenos Aires Province, former dean of

the Facultad de Periodismo y Comunicación Social (UNLP) (2010-2018), *Argentina*

85. **Francisco Durañona**, Senator, former Mayor of San Antonio de Areco, *Argentina*

86. **Gabriel Mariotto**, former vice Buenos Aires Governor, journalist, *Argentina*

87. **Gabriela Rivadeneira**, former President of the National Assembly of Ecuador, former Governor of Imbabura, *Ecuador*

88. **Glauber Braga**, Federal Congressman of Rio de Janeiro State, lawyer, *Brazil*

89. **Horacio Chique**, Councillor of Moreno FDT, Buenos Aires district, *Argentina*

90. **Jorge Arreaza**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, *Venezuela*

91. **Jorge Enrique Taiana**, Congressman, former Ambassador of Argentina in Guatemala, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship, Legislator of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, *Argentina*

92. **José Eduardo Cardozo**, former Minister of Justice, former Attorney General and Federal Deputy, lawyer, *Brazil*

93. **José Miguel Insulza**, Senator, former Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Minister of Foreign Affairs, former Home office Secretary, former Secretary General of the Presidency, former Minister of the Interior, lawyer and Professor of Political Theory at the University of Chile and of Political Science at the Catholic University, *Chile*

94. **Julian Hill**, Member of Federal Parliament, Commonwealth of Australia, *Australia*

95. **Karol Cariola**, Congresswoman, doctor in medicine, *Chile*

96. **Luiza Erundina**, Federal Congresswoman of São Paulo State, former Mayor of São Paulo, sociologist, *Brazil*

97. **Marcelo Brignoni**, Chief of Staff of Advisors to the Presidency of MERCOSUR Parliament, former Congressman, *Argentina*

98. **Marcelo Freixo**, Federal Congresswoman of Rio de Janeiro State, Chairman of the Defence of Human Rights and Citizenship Commission on the Rio de Janeiro Legislative Assembly, broadcaster and Professor, *Brazil*

99. **Marco Enríquez-Ominami**, former Congressman, founder and former president of Fundación Progreso, filmmaker, *France / Chile*

100. **María Cristina Perceval**, former Senator, Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations (2012), Professor of Advanced Epistemology at UNCuyo, *Argentina*

101. **María José Lubertino**, former National Congresswoman, President of the Asociación Ciudadana por los Derechos humanos, lawyer, *Argentina*

102. **María Rachid**, Congresswoman for the constituency of Buenos Aires, Head of the Instituto contra la Discriminación de la Defensoría del Pueblo de Ciudad Autónoma de

Buenos Aires (CABA), vice-president of the National Institute Against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism, *Argentina*.

103. **Maximiliano Reyes**, Undersecretary for Latin America and Caribbean of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, former Congressman, *Mexico*

104. **Mónica Xavier**, Senator, doctor in medicine, *Uruguay*

105. **Oscar Alberto Laborde**, Congressman, President of Mercosur Parliament (Palasur), *Argentina*

106. **Pablo Bergel**, former Congressman for the constituency of Buenos Aires, environmentalist, *Argentina*

107. **Paulo Pimenta**, State Congressman of Rio Grande do Sul State, journalist, *Brazil*

108. **Sâmia Bomfim**, Federal Congresswoman of Rio de Janeiro State, *Brazil*

109. **Talíria Petrone**, Federal Congresswoman of Rio de Janeiro State, *Brazil*

110. **Tarso Genro**, former Minister for Justice, International Relations and Education political adviser to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, former President of Brazil, former Governor of Rio Grande do Sul, former mayor of Porto Alegre, lawyer, *Brazil*

111. **Tereza Campello**, former Minister of Social Development and Fight against Hunger, economist, international consultant on social development and social protection, visiting fellow at University of Nottingham (UK), Professor and research associate at the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (FIOCRUZ), *Brazil*

112. **Verónica Mendoza**, former Congresswoman, former Vice Presidency of the Committee on Culture and Cultural Heritage, Member of the Commission of Andean, Amazonian and Afro-Peruvian Peoples, Environment and Ecology, shift coordinator of the Parliamentary Representation of Cusco, president of the Decentralization Commission, *Peru*

113. **Wadih Damous**, Congressman, former President of the Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil (OAB) in Rio de Janeiro, lawyer, *Brazil*

114. **Zoé Robledo Aburto**, former Secretary of Human Rights, former Senator and Deputy, Director of the Mexican Social Security Institute, *Mexico*

Additionally

Kevin Rudd, statement by former prime minister of Australia, 2007-2010; 2013, *Australia*

Chris Williamson, former British member of parliament, 2010-2015; 2017-2019, *United Kingdom*

Political Parties

Pirate Party Slovenia, *Slovenia*

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