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# AIP

## **Progressive leaders call on US President Biden to drop the charges against Assange**

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Today April 11, progressive leaders, intellectuals, and former heads of state from across the world including Dilma Rousseff, Yanis Varoufakis, Roger Waters, Rafael Correa, among others sent a letter to US President Joe Biden and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi to demand that US officials drop the 18 charges against Julian Assange.

Today also marks the three year anniversary of when Julian Assange was dragged out of the Ecuadorian Embassy in London by the Metropolitan Police, arrested, and put in Belmarsh Prison. He is being held there while the UK courts deliberate on the request to extradite him to the United States where he will stand trial for the 18 charges, many of which are under the Espionage Act, and where he faces a maximum sentence of 175 years.

If extradited and charged, it would be the first time a publisher would be convicted under the Espionage Act and it would mark a dangerous precedent for the right to Free Speech and Press Freedom not only in the US but across the globe.

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Assange who while in prison has already suffered suicide attempts, psychological torture, COVID-19 outbreaks, and a severe deterioration of his physical and mental health has stated that his extradition to the US would be akin to a death sentence.

Many, including the signatories of the letter, have denounced the persecution faced by Assange as retaliation for his brave work with Wikileaks to, as a journalist, uncover the truth about the crimes committed by governments across the world.

Stand with Assange, stand for press freedom.

**JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN TO FREE JULIAN ASSANGE NOW:**

**SEND A LETTER** – Sign this [letter](#) drafted by the IPA and send it to your local [British embassy](#) or [consulate](#) telling them to respect their legal responsibilities and Free Assange NOW!

**PARTICIPATE** – Follow the [social media accounts of the IPA](#) to learn more about Assange's case and his immeasurable contributions to the anti-imperialist struggle today. Share our materials with your communities and movements. Help us get the word out about why we must #FreeAssangeNOW!

*Contact information: [secretaria@asambleadelospueblos.org](mailto:secretaria@asambleadelospueblos.org)*

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President Joseph R. Biden Jr.

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue

Washington, D.C. 20500

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Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi

1236 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

Dear President of United States and Speaker of the House,

We have been paying close attention to the legal process and trial of Australian journalist Julian Paul Assange, who is currently in prison in the United Kingdom where he awaits a final decision on the extradition request made by the government of the United States of America.

The United States of America has a long tradition of defending freedom of expression, freedom of thought, and freedom of the press. The philosophical, legal, political and social thought produced by intellectuals in the United States of America forms an important foundational framework for the reflection and realization of freedom of expression throughout the world. Likewise, the struggle of activists since the 19th century for this freedom has been a source of inspiration for countless societies and countries.

It is precisely in the name of this tradition, continually renewed by daily creation, that we, progressive leaders of the world, address you to ask that, within the scope of its constitutional and legal competence, in respect of due process of law, and the democratic rule of law, that Your Presidency exercise its prerogative of dropping all 18 charges leveled against journalist Julian Paul Assange.

With such a gesture, you will send a strong message to the world: that freedom of expression, freedom of thought, and freedom of the press constitute an instrument that can controvert the interests of any government, including that of the United States of America. The cases where there are reports of serious violations of freedom of expression would also be impacted by the dropping of the 18 charges against Assange. It would affirm the defense of this Fundamental Human Right and would undoubtedly represent a clear and robust sign that everyone can express their opinion without fear of retaliation; that all the press outlets can give news to all the citizens of the world, with the certainty that the pluralism of thought is guaranteed.

It is these considerations that lead us to address you, Mr. President and other American authorities, to request that you drop all 18 charges against Julian Paul Assange.

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São Paulo, April 11, 2022.

*SIGNATORIES OF THE LETTER:*

DILMA ROUSSEFF – Former President of Brazil (2011-2016).

ERNESTO SAMPER – Former President of Colombia (1994-1998) and former General Secretary of UNASUL

FERNANDO LUGO – Former President of Paraguay (2008-2012).

RAFAEL CORREA – Former President of Ecuador (2007-2017)

AIDA NARANJO GARCIA MOCHA – Former Minister for Women in Peru

ALOIZIO MERCADANTE – Former Chief of Staff and former Brazilian Minister of Education in the governments of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff

ANDRÉS ARAUZ – Ecuadorian presidential candidate in 2019

CARLOS OMINAMI – Chilean intellectual

CELSO AMORIM – Brazilian diplomat, Minister of Foreign Affairs in Itamar Franco's government and in Lula's government, and Minister of Defense in Dilma's government

DANIEL MARTÍNEZ – Former Mayor of Montevideo for the Broad Front of Uruguay

ESPERANZA MARTÍNEZ – Senator from the Guasú Front in Paraguay

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GUILLAUME LONG – Former Minister of Foreign Affairs during the Government of Rafael Correa in Ecuador

IDELI SALVATTI – Former Senator of the Republic, former Minister of Human Rights, former Secretary of Access to Rights and Equity at the OAS (Brazil)

IVAN CEPEDA – Senator from the Alternative Democratic Pole party in Colombia

JOSÉ CARLOS DIAS – Lawyer, former Minister of Justice, former Secretary of Justice in the State of São Paulo (Brazil)

JOSÉ EDUARDO CARDOZO – Former Minister of Justice and attorney-general of the Union of Brazil. He is a professor at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo

KAROL CARIOLA – Federal Deputy from the Communist Party of Chile

MARCO ENRÍQUEZ-OMINAMI – Chilean filmmaker

MARIA DO ROSÁRIO NUNES – Member of parliament and former Special Secretary for Human Rights (Brazil)

MARÍA JOSÉ PIZARRO – Senator from the Historic Pact in Colombia

MÓNICA XAVIER – Former Senator from the Broad Front in Uruguay and the former President of the Socialist Party of Uruguay

NILMA GOMES – Professor Emeritus of UFMG. Former Minister of the Secretariat for Racial Equality Policies and the Ministry of Women, Racial Equality and Human Rights (Brazil)

NILMÁRIO MIRANDA – Former National Secretary of Human Rights (Brazil)

PAULO SÉRGIO PINHEIRO – Former Brazilian National Secretary for Human Rights. Former UN Special Rapporteur for the Situation of Human Rights in Burundi, an African country victim of civil war

PAULO VANNUCHI – Former Brazilian Minister of Human Rights (2005-2010). Former Commissioner of Inter American Commission on Human Rights (2014-2017)

PEPE VARGAS – Former Minister of Human Rights, Minister of Institutional Relations, and Minister of Agrarian Development in the Dilma Rousseff government

RICARDO PATIÑO – Former Minister of Foreign Affairs during the Government of Rafael Correa in Ecuador

ROGÉRIO SOTTILI – Executive Director of Vladimir Herzog Institute, former Special Secretary of Human Rights, former Secretary of Human Rights in the State of São Paulo (Brazil)

ROGER WATERS – Singer, songwriter and musician (England)

SLAVOJ ZIZEK – Philosopher (Slovenia)

SRE?KO HORVAT – Philosopher and Co-founder of DiEM25 (Croatia)

TARSO GENRO – Jurist, former Minister of Education, former Minister of Justice, former Governor of the State of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil)

YANIS VAROUFAKIS – Member of the Hellenic Parliament (Greece)

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