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The Hon Julia Gillard MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

CLA Australia Day letter 2011

Civil Liberties Australia requests that – on Australia Day 2011 – you publicly express by a media conference and/or media statement the support and backing of the Australian Government, and of yourself, for the Australian citizen Julian Assange.

We request that you openly and publicly state that Australia stands ready to defend, to the absolute limit, the right of Australians to freedom of speech under international law, and particularly that of Mr Assange in relation to his website, WikiLeaks, and its publishing of documents which reveal the perfidy of nations.

Further, we request that you do this by formal letter to the President of the United States, Mr Obama, written and despatched on Australia Day. We request that your letter to Mr Obama also makes it abundantly clear that Australia will resist, to the limit of its ability in international law, any attempt to 'rendition' Mr Assange from Sweden or any other nation to the United States or to its overt or covert 'territories' or 'detention centres', and that any such renditioning of Mr Assange would have dire consequences for agreements between the USA and Australia as to cooperation across all fields, including civil and military.

CLA believes that you, representing the Australian Government, should demonstrate in public your support for Mr Assange because:

- he is an Australian citizen and passport holder, entitled to the support of his government;
- he has had no relevant charges brought against him in relation to the leaked material: he has broken no Australian (as confirmed by the AFP) or international laws;
- his actions are exposing dishonest government practices worldwide, and
- your earlier statements on Mr Assange have cast doubt on your, and your government's, commitment to his civil liberties and human rights: you need to clarify your position to Australians and to the world, particularly to the USA lest it may believe it has your tacit approval to 'rendition' an Australian by purported legal means, or otherwise.

CLA considers that this is a defining issue for the Australian Government, and for yourself personally. Your action, or inaction, will significantly mark your Prime Ministership. We request that you publicly state your government's and your own position on this Australia Day.

Yours sincerely

Dr Kristine Klugman OAM

President

Civil Liberties Australia

18 January 2011

PS: Should you be unwilling to comply with this request to make such a public statement on 26 January, your reply to this letter with the stated reasons would be appreciated before Australia Day 2011.

Further background:

In communicating with the US President, you may care to remind him that Mr Assange has received a number of awards and nominations, including the 2009 Amnesty International Media Award for publishing material about extrajudicial killings in Kenya, and the Readers' Choice for Time magazine's 2010 Person of the Year.

CLA reminds you of the general view now taken in the United States of whistleblowers Daniel Ellsberg and his role in the Pentagon Papers, and of the Watergate journalists Bernstein and Woodward, who are considered heroes and defenders of free speech for their actions in reporting leaked documents (by 'Deep Throat') over Watergate. These people were also threatened with charges and mistreatment by US Administrations who feared revelation of truth. You may care to remind Mr Obama of these facts.

NOTE: This letter makes no comment on, or in any way relates to, any alleged sexual offence matters concerning Mr Assange in train at time of writing.