



ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES JURISTES DEMOCRATES
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS
ASOCIACION INTERNACIONAL DE JURISTAS DEMOCRATAS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ АССОЦИАЦИЯ ЮРИСТОВ ДЕМОКРАТОВ
國際民主法律家協會
رابطة الحقوقيين الديمقراطيين العالمية

**General Assembly
Human Rights Council
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Item 4 – Situations that require the attention of the Council – General Debate

IADL expresses its grave concern about the imprisonment of whistle-blower Chelsea Manning last week. This is the latest episode in the United States' ongoing campaign of persecution against publisher and journalist Julian Assange and WikiLeaks.

Whistle-blower Chelsea Manning was jailed by the US in 2010 for providing information to WikiLeaks. That information was published by media organisations around the world, including the Guardian, New York Times, Der Spiegel, Le Monde and El Pais, and included evidence of US war crimes and other serious human rights violations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. She was convicted and faced life in prison. The UN Special Rapporteur on torture at that time, Juan Mendez, found that Manning had been subjected to cruel and inhuman treatment. President Obama later commuted Manning's sentence and she was released from prison in 2017.

Manning has been sent to jail again this past week, this time for refusing to comply with a subpoena to testify in front of a grand jury investigating Wikileaks's publishing activities. This grand jury has been ongoing since 2010.

Ms Manning had already given testimony about the publications in relation to her criminal trial in 2012. She said then that "No one at [Wikileaks] pressured me into sending any more information...I take full responsibility." Now she refuses to be questioned by prosecutors again, saying that she is concerned she will be "forced to backtrack on the truth".

This is a grave threat to freedom of the press and is a new angle to attack on the media in the United States: imprisoning a source to coerce testimony about journalists publishing activities.

We urge the United States to:

- Lift the secrecy surrounding the criminal investigation of WikiLeaks and unseal the charges brought against Julian Assange;
- Release immediately Chelsea Manning from prison;
- End the criminal investigation and ongoing persecution of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks.

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