



MEDIA RELEASE

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AUSTRALIANS TO RALLY IN SUPPORT OF WIKILEAKS

Breaking Australia's Silence

Wikileaks and Freedom – A Public Forum

Sydney Town Hall | Wednesday 16 March | 6.30pm | FREE

Prominent Australians are calling on the Gillard Government to ensure that basic human rights principles, including freedom of expression and the presumption of innocence, are protected for all Australians.

A massive public forum in Sydney Town Hall on March 16th is called to break Australia's silence on the plight of courageous Australian citizen Julian Assange and to challenge the failure of the Australian government to protect an Australian citizen who has effectively, been convicted of nothing.

John Pilger, MP Andrew Wilkie and Julian Burnside will address the forum. Julian Burnside comments, 'Governments exist to protect us but the Howard Government betrayed David Hicks and Mahmdoub Habib and allowed the US government to torture them. Now that government is out to get Assange.'

Professor Stuart Rees, Director of the Sydney Peace Foundation, a co-sponsor of the forum, says that Prime Minister Gillard remains indifferent to United States determination' to prosecute an Australian citizen who has been courageous in pursuit of human rights. 'On the contrary, the Prime Minister has been in Washington talking to both Houses of Congress about mateship and praising Secretary of State Hillary Clinton who has said that WikiLeaks is a danger to the world.'

In complete contrast to the Prime Minister's indifference to Assange, and her government's compliance with US interests, President Obama is bending over backwards to protect a US citizen arrested in Pakistan on charges of murder.

Wednesday evening's unique public forum gives members of the public the chance to express support for freedom of expression and for the right to hold governments accountable for openness of decisions and for a commitment to cease holding completely unnecessary secrets. Public awareness and protest will help to realize the promise of Wikileaks to promote courage in public life and to usher in a new order in politics and in journalism.

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