# Julian Assange Released from Belmarsh Prison After Agreeing to US Plea Deal



Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, has been released from Belmarsh prison in London after agreeing to a plea deal with the US Justice Department. Assange, 52, is scheduled to appear in federal court in the Mariana Islands on Wednesday, where he will plead guilty to conspiring to obtain and disclose classified US national defense documents. This plea deal will result in a 62-month sentence, equivalent to the time he has already served, allowing him to avoid further imprisonment in the US.

Assange had been held in the UK while fighting extradition to the US on charges originating from WikiLeaks’ publication of classified documents regarding the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, as well as US diplomatic cables. The breakthrough in negotiations leading to his release has been celebrated by his family. Assange's mother, Christine Assange, highlighted the significance of "quiet diplomacy" in resolving the situation. His father, John Shipton, expressed relief and gratitude to supporters and to the Australian Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, who played a role in the diplomatic efforts between the US and the UK.

Julian Assange was initially thrust into the spotlight in 2009 for his role in leaking vast amounts of classified US military documents and diplomatic cables. He spent seven years in the Ecuadorian embassy in London before his arrest in 2019 and subsequent imprisonment at Belmarsh. He will be reunited with his wife, Stella Assange, and their children, and is expected to travel to Australia following his sentencing.