# Julian Assange to Plead Guilty to Espionage Charge in Plea Deal with U.S.



Julian Assange, founder of WikiLeaks, has entered a plea deal with the United States that will see him plead guilty to an espionage charge. This deal is expected to end his prolonged legal battles and result in his return to Australia. Assange was released from the high-security Belmarsh Prison in London, where he had been held for over five years, on June 24, 2024.

Assange will formally plead guilty at a court hearing scheduled for 9 a.m. local time in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, on June 26, 2024. Under the agreement with U.S. authorities, he will be released based on the time already served.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese welcomed the development, asserting that continued incarceration served no purpose. Assange's release was also met with criticism, notably from former U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, who condemned the plea deal citing national security concerns.

Assange's plea deal and subsequent release mark a significant moment in his long quest for legal resolution following his arrest and extradition proceedings linked to WikiLeaks' publication of classified U.S. military and diplomatic documents.