# Wikileaks Founder Julian Assange to Plead Guilty to Espionage Act Charge



Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, is set to plead guilty to a charge under the Espionage Act in a deal with U.S. authorities. Expected to take place on Wednesday morning local time in the Northern Mariana Islands, the plea concerns allegations of conspiring to unlawfully obtain and disseminate classified national defense information related to the Afghanistan and Iraq wars.

Assange has been in custody at HMP Belmarsh in the UK for over five years, embroiled in a lengthy legal battle against extradition to the United States. His legal struggles began in 2010 and saw him seeking asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London from 2012 to 2019. He was eventually arrested and imprisoned in the UK.

Following his plea, Assange is expected to be sentenced and subsequently return to his home country, Australia. This plea deal likely concludes a decade-long international legal saga involving multiple countries and intense scrutiny over issues of press freedom and national security. His supporters have long argued that he was targeted for his journalistic activities, while U.S. prosecutors contend that he posed a risk to national security.