# Julian Assange's Extradition Decision in the High Court: A Critical Juncture



**Julian Assange Faces Possible Extradition to the U.S.**

On May 20, 2024, Julian Assange's potential extradition to the United States faced a critical juncture in the High Court in London. Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, is wanted in the U.S. on 17 espionage charges and one charge of computer misuse stemming from his website’s publication of classified U.S. documents primarily related to the Afghanistan and Iraq wars.

Assange’s legal team, led by Edward Fitzgerald KC, argued that U.S. assurances regarding his rights, particularly under the First Amendment, were insufficient. U.S. authorities, however, have promised not to seek the death penalty and have stated that Assange could invoke First Amendment protections, although this would ultimately be determined by a judge.

Assange, who did not attend the hearing due to health reasons, has been imprisoned in the U.K. for the last five years. His supporters gathered outside the Royal Courts of Justice, advocating for his release.

The outcome of the hearing hinges on how much credibility the judges place on the U.S. assurances. If the court rules in favor of extradition, Assange can appeal to the European Court of Human Rights. The case has garnered significant international attention, with notable political figures like Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese expressing concern over Assange's prolonged incarceration.