

WJJA WikiJustice Julian Assange

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December 29, 2019

Prisoner of opinion : **Julian Assange** (03/07/1971)

Prison : **Belmarsh**

Prisoner Number: **A 93 79 AY**

Subject: Request for information on mandate
representation in the case **EAW 131226-10**

European Arrest Warrant File No.

AM 131226-10 :

File No. RCJ CO/1925/2011

Medical Report Political Prisoner Julian Paul Assange

Docteur Barbara LAVALLEE.

My name is Barbara LAVALLEE. I'm a French citizen and a Doctor (initially emergency physician and now practising as a preventive medicine), registered under N° 56-3700 at the French National Council of the Order of Physicians (Conseil National de l'Ordre des Médecins).

I attended, as a member of the public and for the first time on 19 December 2019 the case management hearing at the Westminster Magistrate Court in London concerning the extradition request by the USA of Mr Julian Paul ASSANGE.

I arrived very early in the morning expecting the "First In, First Served" rule to be respected. It is thank to the respect for this rule by the court staff that i am able to give this testimony today. I am sorry that my medica colleagues present that day were misled by their inclusion on a list, which has no legal value, and thus prevented them from entering the courtroom.

I testify as a citizen and as a member of the French human rights association WikiJustice Julian Assange.

My abilities and experience as a physician support my observations.

Mr. ASSANGE is not my patient.

Mr ASSANGE sent an SOS to one of the members of the WikiJustice Julian Assange Association, on the front of one of his letters.

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This SOS, published by WikiJustice Julian Assange on September 16, 2019 on social networks, imposes upon me me, as upon all those who are aware of it, the duty to intervene and do everything in my powerto help him.

The SOS was written in Morse code, on the back of the letter, above the prisoner number (... --- ... which means SOS).



SANS LIBERTE D'INFORMER, TOUTE AUTRE FORME DE LIBERTE EST ILLUSOIRE

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I arrived at the hearing with two questions :

- 1- Does Mr ASSANGE's health, or at least what I can understand of it based on attending the hearing, allow him to defend himself, as any accused person should be able to do ?
- 2- Is Mr ASSANGE a victim of torture (as defined by the UN) ?

My response to those questions is as follows :

1- Does Mr ASSANGE's health, at least as I can understand from attending the hearing, allow him to defend himself, as any defendant should be able to do ?

Mr ASSANGE's health, or rather the deterioration of his health, has been a major concern for many years for all those interested in his situation.

The Doctors4Assange open letter of 25 November 2019 is on this point precise and enlightening : <https://medium.com/@doctors4assange/concerns-of-medical-doctors-about-the-plight-of-mr-julian-assange-ffb09a5dd588>.

It highlights a continuous and worrying deterioration of Mr ASSANGE's health since 2015, leading to a serious concern of all the signatory doctors.

This concern is shared by Mr Nils MELZER, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. He said on ¹ November 2019: "*Unless the UK urgently changes course and improves its inhuman situation, Mr ASSANGE's continued exposure to arbitrariness and abuse could soon cost him his life*".

Activists from the Julian Assange WikiJustice Association also reported their concerns after each hearing they attended.

Here are some chronological excerpts :

"October 21, 2019 : Julian ASSANGE appears in person at Westminster Court. He can still express himself.

November 18, 2019 : Julian ASSANGE appears on the video screen, he pronounces his name, with difficulty.

December 13, 2019 : Julian ASSANGE appears on the video screen, he is not able to say his name and date of birth. He ends up laboriously confirming his name, which the judge had to repeat.

December 19, 2019 : Julian ASSANGE appears on video screen. He is struggling to concentrate.»

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Because of the repeated and alarming communications regarding Mr Julian ASSANGE's state of health, I came to attend the hearing in order to better understand his medical condition.

I focused, for the duration of the proceedings, on the video screen showing Mr. ASSANGE. Other persons present transcribed the proceedings of the hearing.

For example via this link: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/french-activism-luttés-intenses-et-audience-fant%C3%B4me-%C3%A0-v%C3%A9ronique>

The following is a transcript of my notes from the December 19, 2019 hearing.

"It is 10 :00 a.m. : The hearing begins.

The screen on the right hand side of the court lights up. There are 3 seats and on the wall the sign "Visitor court room 1" and below, HMP BELMARSH. The room is dark but the seats are lit. The light comes not only from above but also from the front. I wonder if Julian ASSANGE will be dazzled by the light. Apparently not. There is this small oblong window on the left wall, which seems to be smoked, behind which a silhouette can be seen.

"Officer" "Yes" "Mr ASSANGE Please". Time passes. Nothing happens.

One can see a silhouette passing behind the glass, a slightly bouncing walk, the gait of Julian ASSANGE, I recognize it (I've watched many videos and i have followed with great interest the work and career of Mr ASSANGE for many years). This gait is heavier and less fluid than the one I know.

He sits on the first chair and so is not fully visible. Judge Vanessa BARAISTER asks him to move to another chair. His movements are slow and deliberate. At last I see him.

He positions himself very carefully on his chair, forcing his back against the back rest. His face is marked and he looks 15-20 years older than his actual age. His hair is clearly receding . His forehead is lined. He is wearing a grey flannel trousers, a light shirt and a sky blue sweater that looks too big. His shoulders are drooping and he looks exhausted. He is wearing his glasses and looks over the rims. He seems fairly well presented and his hair and beard are short.

Judge Vanessa BARAISTER asks him if he can hear ; He replies « I think so" and then "Correct" when his name and date of birth are stated. He rests his folded hands on his knees. His gestures and words are slow and difficult.

He looks at the screen in front of him, I wonder if he sees anything at all. He makes an effort, discreetly pushing his head forward as if he trying to focus. He sits back again into his chair and crosses his left leg over his right.

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He appears of average build but with the brightness of the light it's difficult to tell if he has lost weight. His cheeks aren't hollow and he doesn't have dark circles around his eyes, but it is impossible to make out the eyes themselves.

Judge Vanessa BARAISTER pronounces the upcoming dates. Julian ASSANGE wiggles his fingers, hands clenched. He moves uncomfortably on his chair, takes off his glasses and replaces them on top of his head. His gestures are clumsy, difficult and imprecise.

Mr FITZERALD speaks of "the Spanish proceedings" and then of the "great problems getting to see Mr Assange".

It's 10 :10 : Julian ASSANGE leans forward, his face closer to the screen and for one or two minutes rests his elbows on his thighs and assumes a more concentrated posture. Then Mrs. DOBBIN speaks and he sits back in his chair, his attention once more absent. I see him take a deep breath and his shoulders sag a little more. His face is inexpressive, his eyes are dead, his energy clearly diminishing with time. He wrings his hands. Sometimes he closes his eyes and his head falls forward before straightening up again, as if he is struggling to stay awake, overcome his exhaustion, the need for sleep overwhelming.

The hearing continues without Julian ASSANGE. He is far away. Not following the proceedings at all. He touches his hair then goes to put his glasses back on but the movement is poorly coordinated and abandoned. His right arm falls on his right thigh.

10 :21 : A silhouette passes behind the smoked glass.

10 :22 : Julian ASSANGE bites his cheek.

10 :23 : Again bites his cheeks and clenches his fists while the dates for the future hearings in January are being discussed.

10 :25 : Close his eyes.

10 :26 : Straightens, leans on the left armrest, wrings his hands and fondles his glasses.

10 :27 : Leans on the right armrest. Mr FITZERALD is talking. Somethong about "great difficulty getting to see Mr Assange " and then" please add your voice at our concern " apparently referring to Judge BARAISTER.

10 :30 : struggles to stay awake, to keep his eyes open and hold his head erect. No visible expression on his face.

Then comes the break.

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I'm watching Julian ASSANGE. He's doing everything in his power to follow the proceedings. Grabs four sheets of paper, puts his glasses back on. He holds the paper by the bottom left corner with his left hand and leafs them with his right. Maybe he's looking for something? In any case, he doesn't read. He puts them down and pushes himself to the back of his armchair, as if exhausted.

There is a square in the bottom right corner of the video screen that I think is what Julian ASSANGE sees from his vantage point in the cubicle. Only the front row of the court room, the judge at her bench and the clerk of the court are visible. Is it against protocol to stand there ? It would be possible to wave to Julian ASSANGE from there, even without the sound, to take him into consideration, to bring him a human contact. But nobody attempts or possibly even considers this

10 :40 : the session resumes and the left video screen is also turned on. Julian ASSANGE remains absent, sits there, motionless, apathetic. His only move is to put his glasses back on his head.

Negotiation regarding the dates resume. Twice Julian ASSANGE grimaces. Grimaces full of pain. Although they are fleeting I still manage to get a good look at him but without being able to identify their physical or psychological origine. It reminds me of the video footage of him the courts when he was momentarily blinded by the flash of the photograpger's camera against the window of the van during his personal appearannce on October 21, 2019.

10 : 45 : Judge Vanessa BARAISTER addresses Julian ASSANGE. He expresses himself with difficulty, struggling to articulate, stumbling over his words. I am forced to look away, embarrassed by his obvious distress.

Immediately afterwards an activist shouts out something about a "pantomime" and the hearing that was about to end anyway closes in some confusion as Judge Vanessa BARAISTER exits and the room is evacuated.

I did my best to describe Julian ASSANGE's attitude during the hearing. What analysis can I propose ?

I saw a man exhausted, unable to concentrate for more than a few minutes.

His posture was static, his shoulders drooping, his features marked. His looked like an hold man with thinning hair.

His gestures are few, slow, insecure, imprecise, sometimes unsuccessful.

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Most were automatic, absent minded, self-centered gestures, (scratching, touching hair, touching an object, hands, glasses) which can have several meanings:

They can help to reassure, giving a sense of self-confidence.

They can serve as stimulation to help fight exhaustion or sleepiness.

They can also help to fight against psychological fragmentation or collapse, which would lead to physical collapse ultimately leading to death. Feeling one's own physical limits so as to maintain ones sense of identity.

I saw a man whose face was mostly impassive, with a few fleeting grimaces evoking pain or suffering.

I saw a man whose speech was laboured, who mumbled his only real sentence, spoken at the end of the hearing.

I saw a man with ideomotor retardation, who was apathetic, demonstrating detachment not due to his apathy but due to the fact that his was unable to follow the proceeding.

I saw a man who couldn't follow what was going on in his own hearing. His trouble concentrating meant he couldn't maintain his attention.

I saw a man who was unable to participate in his own defense.

He did not take notes, did not intervene, did not speak except to confirm his identity and to close the hearing on his own words, saying, from what I could decypher, that he "understood the schedule".

Certainly he handled a few sheets of paper, especially during the break but for what purpose? Did he bring them himself ? Were they there before he arrived ? Were they related to the hearing ?

It's impossible for me, as a spectator, to answer that.

Activists have already attended other extradition hearings involving other men and women. Several cases are heard on these days.

Some defendants appear free, with or without lawyers. Some of them appear in a video link.

Everyone expresses themselves, participates, gives their opinion. Defends themselves. Fights for their future.

Nothing of this sort was observed in the case of Mr. ASSANGE.

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Those close to Julian ASSANGE describe him as a man with a sharp and decisive mind. A demanding man, committed, determined, straightforward, loving and witty . You only have to watch videos of his many conferences, his 2012 Christmas speech on the balcony of the Ecuadorian Embassy for example, to confirmation of that fact.

This was not the same man ! I saw a man barely the shadow of his former self.

However, the man I saw seemed to be trying his best to remain present.

To maintain his identity, humanity and dignity at all times.

Some activists expressed relief at the end of the hearing : "He looked better than he did last week. He wasn't as broken as last time. His eyes less hollow and he didn't seem to be so cold".

Ms. Naomi COLVIN, who attended the hearing, tweeted: "Here are my notes. Julian #Assange has been attentive to this hearing, following things closely. He had papers in his hand and flipped through them from time to time. He wore glasses, a shirt and a purple sweater."

These elements could be understood in another context, such as his the case of a person at the end of life, where, at each visit, one looks for little signs of reassurance that things are better. That there has been somme improvement, that there is hope.

But Mr Julian ASSANGE's situation is quite different: Mr ASSANGE is a prisoner despite having served his sentence, and who according to the United Kingdom law should have been release on September 23 2019. A man who remains imprisoned in solitary confinement 22 or 23 hours a day, in a high security prison awaiting a court decision on an extradition request issued by the USA, following which he risks up to 175 years in prison or even the death penalty.

A man that even his lawyers are having trouble visiting.

The judicial system and the prison system are therefore responsible and answerable for his health.

My assessment of the situation leads me to the conclusion that Mr Julian ASSANGE is in great distress. His health is impaired. His life is in danger.

The medical consequences of isolation and extended stress (in the medical sense) are well known:

From a psychological point of view, we find among other things :

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- ✓ Mood disorders,
- ✓ Apathy,
- ✓ Psychomotor retardation,
- ✓ Anxiety,
- ✓ Depression,
- ✓ Confusion
- ✓ Depersonalization,
- ✓ Identity issues,
- ✓ Psychotic disorders,
- ✓ Post-traumatic stress disorder,
- ✓ Impossibility of creating a logical and coherent system of thought...

In my opinion as a witness and a medical professional some of the above clearly apply to Mr ASSANGE.

Recent studies have shown the appearance of brain lesions after 7 days of isolation, with long term effects that can last more than 10 years (*90 Ind. L.J. 741 (2015) E. BENNION: Banning the Bing: Why Extreme Solitary Confinement Is Cruel and Far Too Usual Punishment*).

From a physiological point of view, due to the chronic increase in stress response hormones we can note among others :

- ✓ Collapse of the immune system increasing the risk of serious infections,
- ✓ Increased cardiovascular risk that can lead to heart rhythm disorders, high blood pressure, myocardial infarction.
- ✓ Increased risk of cancer
- ✓ Sudden death.

Only a medical consultation, carried out jointly by independent doctors specialized in physical and mental health, would make possible to establish a diagnosis, a prognosis, and to know whether a treatment is being administered to Mr ASSANGE, modifying his faculties.

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So to the first question : Does Mr ASSANGE's health, or at least what I can understand from attending the hearing, allow him to defend himself, as any accused person should be able to do?

The answer is a very clear and emphatic NO.

His impaired concentration, exhaustion and inability to follow the proceedings, let alone take part in them, should make it impossible for him to continue with the hearings and the extradition proceedings because of his impaired health, making it impossible for him to defend himself.

This deteriorated state of health also invalidates his testimony of December 20, 2019 in the investigation regarding the embassy espionage case. This testimony will have to be reassessed at a later date, once his health has been restored.

Mr Julian ASSANGE must be able to benefit from appropriate care, in an appropriate environment (which cannot be a prison) and in a country not involved in the complex legal proceedings under way, in order to avoid any risk of direct or indirect pressure on the carers, a pressure mentioned in the doctors4Assange letter already quoted above.

The United Kingdom, the United States of America, Ecuador, Australia, Sweden and Spain should be excluded from the countries allowed to receive and care for Mr ASSANGE.

2-Second question : Is Mr ASSANGE a victim of torture ?

What definitions should be given to the term torture ?

✓ At the Universal level:

Torture was defined by the United Nations General Assembly in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1948 and the UN International Convention against Torture of 10 December 1984 and entered into force in 1987. This convention has 169 States Parties and 83 signatory States as of 29 December 2019. They can be consulted via the following link:

https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATYtdsg_no=IV9hapter=4lang=fr#EndDec

This convention also created the Committee against Torture, which examines States' compliance with the convention. It may also receive and examine under certain conditions individual or State communications relating to non-compliance with the Convention by a State Member.

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✓ At the regional level:

Other texts or treaties may complete the definition <https://dictionnaire-droit-humanitaire.org/content/article/2/torture-et-traitements-cruels-inhumains-et-degradants/>.

- The European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Adopted on 26 November 1987 by the Council of Europe and entered into force in 1989. It has been ratified by all 47 states.

<https://www.humanrights.ch/fr/droits-humains-internationaux/conseil-europe/torture/>

- The Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture, adopted on 9 December 1985 under the aegis of the OAS and entered into force on 28 February 1987. <https://journals.openedition.org/revdh/962?lang=en>

Torture is a major violation of human dignity. It is not reduced to physical aggression alone, it is also and above all a systematic process of destruction of the psychic, social and relational integrity of an individual.

Article 1, paragraph 1 of the UN International Convention on Torture :

"For the purposes of this Convention, the term "torture" means

- ✓ Any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person
- ✓ For the purposes of, inter alia, obtaining information or a confession from him or a third person, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind,
- ✓ Where such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.
- ✓ This term does not extend to pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions."

This definition imposes the existence of several cumulative conditions. It is supplemented by the additional prohibition of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment which does not reach the threshold of acute suffering required to amount to torture but which is nevertheless committed by a public official or other person acting in an official capacity, at his or her instigation or with his or her consent or acquiescence (art. 16).

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The definition gives a broad interpretation of the status of the torturer as an agent of the State. Indeed, acts of torture remain covered by the definition and attributable to the State or its agent even if they are not directly committed by the State but take place "at its instigation or with its consent or acquiescence".

Such tacit consent may be presumed in cases where the State fails to comply with other core obligations under the Convention : to investigate such acts, punish perpetrators and provide effective remedies to victims.

Indeed, under the International Convention against Torture, States undertake to train and supervise their own officials involved in detention and interrogation tasks, including civilian, military and law enforcement personnel, medical personnel, public officials and other persons who may be involved in the custody, interrogation or treatment of any person arrested, detained or imprisoned in any manner whatsoever (art. 10).

They undertake to exercise systematic supervision over the rules, instructions, methods and practices of interrogation, as well as the custody of persons deprived of their liberty in their territory (art. 11). They undertake to conduct prompt and impartial investigations whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that an act of torture may have been committed in their territory (art. 12).

States also undertake to provide effective judicial remedies to persons who claim to have been victims of torture, as well as a right to reparation for such persons (arts. 13-14). Lastly, they undertake not to use statements obtained under torture as evidence in judicial proceedings (art. 15).

The Convention against Torture does not allow for any derogation from the prohibition of torture, even in exceptional circumstances or a state of war (art. 2.2). **It prohibits States from returning, expelling or extraditing a person to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he or she would be in danger of being subjected to torture (art. 3).**

Obedience to the orders of a superior officer or a public authority cannot be invoked as a justification for participation in acts of torture (art. 2.3).

States have an obligation to try their own agents involved in such practices (art. 4). They also undertake to adopt rules of national law enabling them to try foreign perpetrators of such acts if they are in their territory, regardless of their nationality and the country in which the torture was committed, but also if the torture was committed in the national territory, if the victim or

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the accused is a national (art. 5). This is an application of the principle of universal jurisdiction or competence, used exceptionally at the international level for the most serious crimes.

The limitation of the definition of torture to acts committed by public officials is explained by the desire to focus international repression on acts for which the national will and capacity for repression may be lacking. Cruel treatment committed by individuals or groups who are not agents of the State is not covered by the International Convention but remains prohibited and punishable under the national criminal law of each country. Indeed, there is no reason to fear tolerance by national authorities of acts committed by private actors unconnected with the State.

The definition of torture contained in the Inter-American Convention adds an explicit reference to mental torture to the international definition.

It defines the latter as "the application to any person of methods designed to nullify the personality of the victim or to diminish his physical or mental capacity, even if these methods and procedures do not cause physical pain or mental anguish". This convention incorporates the main provisions of the International Convention against Torture. It specifies and adapts in the regional framework the obligations related to extradition and the principle of universal jurisdiction, and those guaranteeing adequate compensation for victims (art. 9). It does not create a specific committee because the Inter-American Court and Commission on Human Rights are competent to deal with these crimes of torture.

The European Convention for the Prevention of Torture complements the prohibition of torture contained in Article 3 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights.

These two texts do not provide a definition of torture. They do, however, provide for important prevention and enforcement mechanisms. The Convention for the Prevention of Torture establishes a European Committee for the Prevention of Torture. It has extensive powers to visit and investigate all places of detention in the Member States. The European Court of Human Rights is competent to receive and judge complaints concerning acts of torture that constitute violations of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights.

Torture is also prohibited in the broader framework of international or regional human rights conventions and humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 (art. 5) ;
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 (art. 7) ;
- European Convention on Human Rights of 1950 (art. 3);

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- Inter-American Convention on Human Rights of 1978 (art. 5);
- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981 (art. 5);
- Geneva Conventions of 1949 (common article 3) ;
- Additional Protocol I of 1977 to the Geneva Conventions (art. 75.2) ;
- Additional Protocol II of 1977 to the Geneva Conventions (art. 4.2) ;
- Statute of the International Criminal Court (arts. 7 and 8

What's Mr. Julian ASSANGE's status ?

It is essential at this point to remember that Mr Julian ASSANGE has been deprived of his liberty since December 7 2010, the date of his incarceration in London Wandsworth Prison following the issuance by Sweden of an international arrest warrant for preliminary investigation in a case of alleged rape (Sweden definitively dropped the charges in this case on November 19 2019).

He was released on bail on December 16, 2010.

He has been deprived of his freedom since June 2012 ; first at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London and since April 2019 in prison, in solitary confinement.

He has therefore been isolated for many years, in a closed environment, cut off, to all intents and purposes, from the outside world.

Mr. Nils MELZER, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment declared on 31 May 2019 after visiting Mr. Julian ASSANGE in prison that he "presents all the symptoms of torture (...) to which he has been exposed for several years".

These remarks were confirmed by Mr Craig MURRAY, former British Ambassador, at the end of the hearing on October 21 2019 where Mr Julian ASSANGE physically appeared. <https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2019/10/assange-in-court/>.

The most recent testimony is of Mr. Vaughan SMITH, via Twitter on December 27, 2019 who having had a telephone conversation with Mr. ASSANGE on Christmas Eve wrote : "Julian Assange called my family from jail on Christmas Eve while we were making dinner. Please, have a thought for him. He spoke to my wife, Pranvera, and our daughters - who remembered Christmas with him in 2010, when he was our guest on bail. # Political prisoners #

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That was the last time Julian had a family Christmas. He told my wife and I that he was slowly dying in Belmarsh where, although only in pre-trial detention, he is kept in segregation for 23 hours a day and is often sedated. His extradition to the United States begins in February... »

And he desperately needs our support."

<https://twitter.com/VaughanSmith/status/1210278654615474176?s=09>

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules)

https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/GA-RESOLUTION/E_ebook.pdf
defines and limits segregation as follows:

Rule 43

(1) Under no circumstances may disciplinary restrictions or sanctions be assimilated to acts of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, the following practices are prohibited: (a) solitary confinement for an indefinite period of time; (b) prolonged solitary confinement; (c) placing a prisoner in a dark or constantly lit cell; (d) corporal punishment or reduction of a prisoner's diet or drinking water; (e) collective punishment.

2. Instruments of restraint must never be used to punish disciplinary offences.

3. Disciplinary sanctions or restrictive measures should not include the prohibition of contact with family. Means of contact with the family may be restricted only for a limited period and only to the extent that they are strictly necessary for the maintenance of security and order.

Rule 44

For the purposes of these rules, solitary confinement shall mean the holding of prisoners for 22 hours or more per day without significant human contact. Prolonged solitary confinement shall mean solitary confinement for a period of more than 15 consecutive days. »

1 Solitary confinement shall only be used in exceptional cases, as a last resort, for the shortest possible time and subject to independent review, and only with the authorisation of a competent authority. It should not be imposed under a prison sentence.

2 The imposition of solitary confinement should be prohibited in the case of mentally or physically handicapped prisoners when their situation would be aggravated by such measures. The prohibition of the use of solitary confinement and similar measures in cases involving

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women and children, as referred to in other United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice, continues to apply. "

In Mr ASSANGE's case, the statements made by both his relatives and Mr Nils MELZER suggest that the "Nelson Mandela Rules" are not being respected.

The "Istanbul Protocol" is a manual for the effective investigation of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. It contains general standards for researching and documenting situations of torture or other human rights violations.

The "Istanbul Protocol" was published in 1999 on the initiative of the Medical Union of Turkey, the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey and Physicians for Human Rights. The text was developed over three years by doctors, forensic scientists, psychologists, human rights observers and lawyers. In the end, no less than 75 experts were involved, representing more than 40 organisations from 15 different countries.

This protocol submitted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights was **adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in August 1999 and on 4 December 2000 by the Commission on Human Rights (now: Human Rights Council)**. The protocol has also been recognised "as an effective and appropriate means of providing information and documentation on allegations of torture" by the European Union and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

The following are excerpts from the "Practical Guide to the Istanbul Protocol for Psychologists - Psychological Assessment of Allegations of Torture" :

"All types of torture inevitably include psychological processes (Kordon et al., 1988) Torture often causes different levels of psychological/psychiatric symptoms.

Methods of torture are often designed to leave no physical harm, and physical methods can produce non-durable or uncharacteristic physical symptoms.

Improved methods of detecting and proving physical torture have paradoxically led to more sophisticated methods of torture that leave no visible marks on the victim's body (Jacobs, 2000). Most of the symptoms and physical signs of torture that may be left behind disappear quickly (Finn Somnier et al., 1992).

Psychological symptoms are generally more frequent and longer lasting than physical symptoms.

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In contrast to the physical impact of torture, the psychological consequences often take longer to heal and are more problematic than physical disabilities. Several aspects of psychological state can be affected in the long term; if left untreated, victims may continue to suffer the psychological consequences - more or less severe - of torture several months or years after the event, and sometimes even for life. (See § 159, § 161, §§ 260-261 of the Istanbul Protocol).

Torture is a dynamic process that begins during the deprivation of liberty, involves a succession of traumatic events that may take place at different times in different places and ends with the release or disappearance of the victim (Somnier et al, 1992). It can sometimes continue or repeat itself. This cascade of events may begin again after a short interval, without giving the victim time to recover. The person experiences a total loss of control, a sense of inevitability and is taken aback by the torturer's unpredictability (Kira, 2002).

These feelings can be accompanied by a sense of total confusion, helplessness and loss of control that can destroy the understanding of oneself, of any meaningful existential system and of the predictability of the world (Fischer & Gurriss, 1996; McFarlane, 1995).

Torture can traumatize the victim at different levels (Fischer & Gurriss, 1996; Gurr & Quiroga, 2001; Jacobs, 2000; Kira, 2002; Lira Kornfeld, 1995; Shapiro, 2003; Lira, 1995; Jacobs, 2000; Gurr & Quiroga, 2001; Summerfield, 1995) :

- ✓ Physical and psychological integrity and entity
- ✓ Cognitive, emotional, behavioural and social well-being
- ✓ Personality
- ✓ Identity
- ✓ Autonomy
- ✓ Self-realization
- ✓ Self-esteem
- ✓ Sense of security and survival
- ✓ Dreams, hopes and aspirations for the future
- ✓ Belief system
- ✓ System of meaning of self and the world
- ✓ Attachment

SANS LIBERTE D'INFORMER, TOUTE AUTRE FORME DE LIBERTE EST ILLUSOIRE

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- ✓ Trust
- ✓ Torture also destroys the victim's sense of belonging to a family and society".

Mr Julian ASSANGE is therefore, in view of the above elements, subjected to torture as Mr Nils MELZER has stated on several occasions (31 May and 1-14 and 27 November 2019).

The expert reports and the various observations reported highlight his deteriorated state of health, requiring immediate, safe and appropriate care.

Medical experts need to be able to meet with him to assess his health and depending on the medical assessment, he must receive appropriate care, if necessary hospitalized or discharged.

In the meantime, pending legal proceedings must be suspended.

When we become accustomed to the intolerable, when we accept the unacceptable, we prepare ourselves for what we believe is inevitable and we can lose our critical sense.

Mr Julian ASSANGE sent an SOS to one of his supporters.

This SOS has been published and distributed since September 2019.

All those who remain inactive are at the very least guilty of failing to assist a person in danger.

All those with the power to prevent the worsening of his condition, which could be fatal, (prison administration, justice services, states, lawyers, experts, doctors, citizens) would be guilty of homicide or complicity in homicide if they did not act immediately to ensure his safety and adequate medical care.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Lavallee'.

Dr Barbara LAVALLEE

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"Considering that recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world". Universal Declaration of Human Rights, § 1 of the preamble

"Considering that disregard and contempt for human rights have led to barbarous acts which outrage the conscience of mankind and that the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of mankind".

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, § 2 of the preamble

"No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 5.

Human dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected.

(European Charter of Human Rights, art.1)