

Australia rebukes U.S. for refusing to drop case against Assange



Sydney, August 3 (RHC)-- Australia has rebuked the United States for the latter's refusal to cease its prosecution of Julian Assange, saying it would persist in its efforts to have Washington drop its legal proceedings against the WikiLeaks founder.

"This has gone on for too long. Enough is enough," Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told reporters on Tuesday. "We remain very firm in our view and in our representations to the American government and we will continue to do so," he added.

An Australian citizen, Assange, used to take sanctuary at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London before April 2019, when the diplomatic mission handed him over to British authorities. He is currently being held in London's Belmarsh Prison, where he is fighting extradition to the United States.

American authorities seek to bring Assange to trial for WikiLeaks' 2010 release of classified military documents related to the US forces' war crimes and other atrocities in Afghanistan and Iraq. Washington has charged him with 18 counts related to the release of 500,000 classified files about the U.S.'s military interference in the countries -- providing proof of U.S. war crimes.

Assange could face up to 175 years in prison in the United States.

Last week, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken reaffirmed Washington's determination to have Assange tried on American soil. Blinken claimed that Assange's actions had "risked very serious harm to our national security, to the benefit of our adversaries, and put named human sources at grave risk – grave risk – of physical harm, and grave risk of detention."

Assange, he went on, was "charged with very serious criminal conduct" and had allegedly taken part in "one of the largest compromises of classified information in the history of our country."

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