



Dear Nina Cross ([REDACTED])

Thank you for your email of 13 July, in which you ask for the following information:

1. copies of any correspondence, electronic or written, from any members of the British government or their representatives, to the BBC between January 2019 and December 2019 regarding Julian Assange.
2. copies of any correspondence, electronic or written, from any members of the British government or their representatives, to the BBC regarding an interview with former Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt about the arrest of Julian Assange on 11th April 2019. The link to the interview is here:
https://twitter.com/BBCPolitics/status/1116297631519531009?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw
3. copies of any correspondence, electronic or written, from the BBC to any members of the British government, or their representatives, regarding the scheduling of the BBC interview with Jeremy Hunt around the arrest of Julian Assange on 11th April 2019.
4. copies of any correspondence, electronic or written, from the BBC to any members of the British government, or their representatives, regarding Julian Assange between January 2019 and December 2019.

Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Home Office Communications Directorate provides responses to bona fide members of the media reporting on issues involving the department. Therefore, to answer your questions 1 & 2, our records show that between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019, members of the media working for the BBC contacted the Home Office Press Office seven times on the matter of Julian Assange. The information is attached as Annex A.

We have released the following information without applying any exemptions. However, the Home Office has obligations under data protection legislation and in law generally to protect personal data. We have concluded that some information is exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the FOI Act, because of the condition at section 40(3A)(a). This exempts personal data if disclosure would contravene any of the data protection principles in Article 5(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation and section

34(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018. Therefore names, email addresses and phone numbers have been removed.

We can confirm we do not hold any information to answer questions 2 and 3 of your request.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to foirequests@homeoffice.gov.uk, quoting reference **65075**. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Yours sincerely

Home Office

ANNEX A

- **11/04/2019**

BBC request for comments and requests for an interview with a Home Office Minister in relation to Julian Assange's arrest on Thursday April 11.

BBC WATO on Assange

wants our lines or anything we have on this

Response

Directed to HS and FS tweets as well as to the MET

Requesting an interview bid

Response

Declined and directed to HS statement in House and factsheet

- **12/04/2019**

Request for comment after a letter was sent to the Home Secretary regarding the potential extradition of Julian Assange to Sweden

We have been approached by BBC News, Sky News and ITV News a letter that Stella Creasey MP has coordinated. The letter calls on the Home Secretary to extradite Julian Assange to Sweden to face prosecution for allegations of sexual assault, as Sweden is considering whether to reopen an investigation into rape and sexual assault allegations against him. Media report that over 70 MPs, mostly from the opposition party, and Lords have signed the letter.

Sky News have also asked for clarity on:

- Whether we are legally required to extradite him to Sweden if the Swedish officials were to do so?
- Would it be for the Home Secretary himself to determine whether a Swedish or US priority would take place if Sweden were to request an extradition. At the moment the Guardian report that it would be the Crown Prosecution Service's choice

Response

We have not commented but have sent links as per the lines to take below.

Our statement on the extradition request:

<https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2019/04/11/extradition-factsheet/>

The Home Secretary's statement in Parliament, worth noting in particular that he set out the proves and said that he would not discuss the accusations further:

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-04-11/debates/0650F0B8-1D1E-4FD5-8E6D-9A94FE112986/ArrestOfJulianAssange>

Section 179 of the Extradition Act which relates to competing claims to extradition

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/41/section/179>

- **12/04/2019**

Same request as above but from another part of the BBC

Hi <redacted>,

It would be good to get a statement from the home office to this letter coordinated by Stella Creasy, and signed by lots of MPs – text below.

In a similar vein this evening the Shadow Home Secretary said that Julian Assange "should be extradited to Sweden and then the Americans can make a further application to have him extradited."

She said she was "disgusted" that the "American case has been allowed to eclipse the cases of these two women."

Any help much appreciated,

Best,

<redacted>

Dear Sajid,

We are writing to request that you do everything you can to champion action that will ensure that Julian Assange can be extradited to Sweden in the event Sweden makes an extradition request. This would be so the formal investigation into an allegation of rape can be concluded and, if appropriate, a charge can be made and any trial can take place. We do not presume guilt, of course, but we believe due process should be followed and the complainant should see justice be done.

The allegation of rape has a limitation period which expires in August 2020. Other allegations are already time bound because of the unavailability of Assange. Justice has already been denied in respect of those allegations. There is a serious risk that if the UK does not give every cooperation to any renewed request from Sweden there could be a further injustice. This would be unacceptable. We note that the rape allegation was held by the UK courts to be an allegation which would also constitute an allegation of rape under domestic law.

The current investigation in Sweden has been discontinued only because of Assange's unavailability. The lawyer for the rape complainant has formerly asked for the investigation to be resumed. The Swedish prosecution Authority has announced it is considering whether the case can be resumed. The UK should tell Sweden that it will have our full cooperation if they chose to do so.

The decision to rescind the political asylum of Mr Assange by the Ecuadorian authorities seems to have been something of which both the UK and US authorities were made aware in advance. It is therefore of grave concern to us that it appears that the Swedish authorities were not aware of the plans made to arrest Mr Assange yesterday in London, and we would welcome clarity as to what action the UK authorities took to ensure that the Swedish prosecutors were informed in advance of this decision.

At present the media attention has been on the decision made by the US authorities to seek extradition. It is for the courts to determine whether this is an appropriate course of action and we make no assessment as to the outcome of this case.

However, we urge you both to confirm that you will give every assistance to Sweden should they want to revive and pursue the investigation. We must send a strong message of the priority the UK has in tackling sexual violence and the seriousness with which such allegations are viewed.

We urge you to stand with the victims of sexual violence and seek to ensure that case against Mr Assange can now be properly investigated.

Your Sincerely,

Stella Creasy MP.

Response

Directed to current lines

- **12/04/2019**

BBC News asking for guidance around how UK deals with competing extradition requests

Hi <redacted>,

As discussed I was wondering if you could provide any general guidance on what the procedure would be if Assange faces extradition to both the US and Sweden eg who would make the decision about which extradition takes precedence

We would like to include this in our online article asap so if you are able to provide any guidance that would be much appreciated.

Many thanks,

<redacted>

<redacted>

Journalist, BBC News Website

<redacted>

<redacted>@bbc.co.uk

<redacted>

Response

Guided to fact sheet

- **13/04/2019**

Same request as above but from another part of the BBC

Do you have a response to the letter? What happens if there are competing extradition requests?

Response

Sent link: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/41/section/179>

- **13/06/2019**

Request for comment on whether the Home Secretary had signed an extradition request in relation to Julian Assange.

A Home Office spokesperson said:

“Mr Assange was arrested in relation to a provisional extradition request from the United States of America. He is accused of offences including computer misuse and the unauthorized disclosure of national defence information.

“We have received the full extradition request, which has been certified by the Home Secretary.

“This case is now before the courts and it would be inappropriate to comment further.”

Background

- The Home Secretary must certify a valid request for extradition from a category 2 territory unless certain narrow exceptions in section 70 of the Extradition Act 2003 apply.

In this case, none of those exceptions apply.

- The extradition request was certified under section 70 of the Extradition Act 2003, in accordance with UK law.