

# Assange extradition moves closer as US provides UK court with assurances

LONDON, April 16 (Reuters) - The United States has provided assurances requested by the High Court in London which could finally pave the way for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to be extradited from Britain.

Last month, the High Court ruled that, without certain U.S. guarantees, Assange, 52, would be allowed to launch a new appeal against being extradited to face 18 charges, all but one under the Espionage Act, over WikiLeaks' release of confidential U.S. military records and diplomatic cables.

Those assurances - that in a U.S. trial he could seek a First Amendment right to free speech and that there was no prospect of new charges which could see the death penalty being imposed - have now been submitted by a deadline which fell on Tuesday.

The document, seen by Reuters, states that Assange "will have the ability to raise and seek to rely upon at trial the rights and protections given under the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States". However it adds that a decision on the "applicability of the First Amendment is exclusively within the purview of the U.S. courts".

The document also says that a sentence of death will neither be sought nor imposed.

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