

PRESS RELEASE

A resolution from the Geneva Parliament inviting the Federal Council to urgently issue a humanitarian visa for Julian Assange

For the first time in Switzerland and in the world, the Geneva Parliament has voted for a humanitarian visa to be issued to Julian Assange by the Swiss Government (Federal Council). This humanitarian visa will allow Julian Assange to benefit from health care in Geneva at the Cantonal Hospital (HUG).

The Resolution, which has been filed by MP Jean Rossiaud, and is further supported by some 20 other MPs, was adopted at a very large majority¹ on Thursday 27th February 2020. Mauro Poggia, Minister of security with the Geneva Government, has declared that he will vigorously support this resolution at the Federal level.

Julian Assange needs to recover physically and psychologically, having spent over 9 years in confinement first at the Ecuadorian embassy and then in a high-security prison in England. The Resolution is supported by statements and open letters from thousands of journalists, and hundreds of doctors, MPs, lawyers and NGOs from around the world, as well as the reports of the UN special rapporteur (Professor Nils Melzer) on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. As stated by the latter, the current detention of Julian Assange is illegal and Mr Assange has been subject to torture.

Julian Assange needs immediate health care to enable him to decide for himself, knowingly and in full possession of his mental capacities, mainly on where he would like to live and how he intends to live his life.

Geneva, capital of the United Nations and the humanitarian action and home base of the International Committee of the Red Cross, offers all that is needed in terms of healthcare while being neutral, independent and fully committed to the humanitarian principles.

The Geneva cantonal hospital (HUG) has an international reputation and is well known for its centre dedicated to victims of torture. It offers the appropriate level of security for such patients.

The extradition hearings of Julian Assange are due to end in May 2020. However, a final decision may only be issued in 2 to 3 years should an appeal be filed. Julian Assange could, however, be released provisionally to allow him to be treated since Sweden has definitely dropped all charges for “sexual misconduct” after 9 years of “preliminary investigations”.

Julian Assange may sign the formal request to be granted a humanitarian visa at any time, which would then be filed at the Swiss embassy in London, either by him or by one of his authorized representatives. The Federal Council's should take into account the positive decision of the Canton of Geneva.

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Schedule: Resolution R906 : <http://ge.ch/grandconseil/data/texte/R00906.pdf>

¹ 57 MPs voted in favor of the resolution, 16 MPs voted against the resolution, 4 MPs have officially abstained from voting and some 20 MPs decided not to vote, despite the decision of their party to oppose the resolution.