



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL  
MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

12/10675, MC12/08690

1 AUG 2012

Mr Stephen Keim SC  
President, Australian Lawyers for Human Rights  
PO Box A147  
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235

Dear Mr Keim

Thank you for your letter of 9 July 2012 to the Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, regarding Mr Julian Assange. I am responding to you on her behalf.

In your letter, you seek confirmation that Ms Gareth Peirce's letter of 28 May 2012 has been responded to and inquire whether any of the assurances sought by Ms Peirce have been pursued by the Australian Government. I am advised that Mr Ken Pascoe of the Australian High Commission in London responded to Ms Gareth Peirce's letter on 19 July 2012. Mr Pascoe informed Ms Peirce that, as long as Mr Assange is being afforded due process, the Australian Government does not consider it appropriate to make representations to foreign governments whilst legal proceedings are in train in another jurisdiction.

You also request information as to the specific nature of the consular assistance being afforded to Mr Assange. When Australians are facing legal proceedings overseas, consular assistance broadly comprises welfare assistance and efforts to ensure they receive legal due process. Further information about consular services offered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is set out in its Consular Services Charter, and is available at <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/services/consular-services-charter.html>.

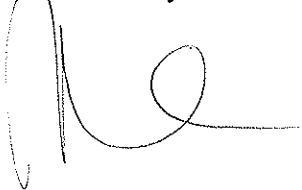
The Australian Government has provided strong consular support to Mr Assange throughout his extradition proceedings in the United Kingdom. Australian consular officials visited Mr Assange when he was detained and responded to a number of issues that he raised. Since Mr Assange was granted bail in December 2010, Australian consular officials have been in contact with his lawyers on more than 20 occasions, and have regularly conveyed to them the Australian Government's preparedness to provide consular support. Australian consular officials have also attended all of Mr Assange's court hearings. Most recently, Australian consular officials in London have been in contact with the Ecuadorian Embassy and Mr Assange's lawyers to reiterate the offer of continued consular support and to check on Mr Assange's welfare. This is consistent with the support that the Australian Government provides to any Australian facing legal proceedings overseas.

You have requested information about communications between the Australian Government and the governments of the United Kingdom, Sweden and the United States. Mr Assange has pursued his legal case to the highest court in the United Kingdom and has been afforded his full legal rights. The Government has sought and received formal assurances on a number of occasions from Sweden that Mr Assange's case will proceed in accordance with due process and procedural fairness. It is premature to speculate on what representations the Australian Government may make to the US Government in the absence of advice that any charges have been laid in that country, though the Australian Government has raised with United States authorities its expectation that due process be afforded to Mr Assange in the event that any legal proceedings were to be commenced in the United States. The Minister for Foreign Affairs has raised this issue with United States authorities and I have raised the issue in recent meetings with the United States Secretary for Homeland Security, the United States Deputy Attorney-General and the United States Ambassador to Australia. As you would appreciate, the content of communications between the Australian Government and foreign governments is confidential, and as such, I do not intend to comment further about these communications.

You have requested that the Australian Government make enquiries with the Swedish Public Prosecutor to facilitate the questioning of Mr Assange whilst in the Ecuadorian Embassy. The Australian Government cannot intervene in legal proceedings in foreign jurisdictions on behalf of Australian citizens. Sweden's request for Mr Assange's extradition from the United Kingdom is being carried out in accordance with relevant laws and treaties governing extradition between these two countries. As noted above, the Australian Government has made representations to, and obtained assurances from, the Swedish Government that Mr Assange's case will proceed in accordance with due process. It is appropriate that any representation Mr Assange wishes to make to the Swedish authorities about the conduct of their proceedings against him be made by his legal representatives on his behalf.

I trust this information addresses the issues you raise in your letter. The Australian Government will continue to closely monitor Mr Assange's situation and advocate on his behalf to ensure that he is accorded procedural fairness and due process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Roxon', with a large, stylized initial 'N' and a horizontal line extending to the right.

**NICOLA ROXON**