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German MPs Heike Hänsel and Sevim Dagdelen, deputy chairwomen of the parliamentary group DIE LINKE in the German parliament, visited today publisher and WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in London. After the meeting in the Ecuadorian embassy, they said:

"Dear representatives of the media,

1. First of all, we would like to thank the Embassy of Ecuador for making this meeting possible for us, and of course Julian Assange for agreeing to a visit under these difficult conditions.
2. We have conveyed to Julian Assange the solidarity greetings of the Left Party and the solidarity of the many supporters from Germany. The people in Germany and throughout the world are indebted to Mr Assange. He has contributed to bringing to light the war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan and the illegal activities of the secret services, particularly the CIA. He has opened our eyes to how dirty and bloody these wars were and are, and how much we have been deceived by our governments. He deserves our solidarity.
3. Julian Assange was very pleased with our visit. This is the first visit by Members since March after months of suspension. We would very much like more colleagues from other countries to come to London and work for a humanitarian solution to this situation. As parliamentarians, we should ask our governments to act. Unfortunately, the German Government has so far done nothing to find a solution. We have regretted this to Julian Assange. Also, we call on fellow MPs in the UK and across Europe to work for a humanitarian solution.
4. The fight for an end to the imprisonment of Julian Assange is at the same time a fight against the attempt of the US government and legal authorities to get hold of a journalist in Europe who has published in Europe. We oppose this extraterritorial political persecution across international borders. We cannot accept that the USA should enforce its laws against whistleblowers in Europe as well.
5. We are very pleased that Julian Assange is still optimistic and in good spirits, even though he has been in such a difficult situation for more than six years. We agree that the British and Ecuadorian governments can find a solution and provide diplomatic assurances against extradition to the US.

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If the Ecuadorian authorities end the embassy asylum, Julian Assange could be arrested in the UK and extradited to the US, where he would face a long prison sentence or even the death penalty.

If someone is to be extradited to a country where he is facing a death sentence because of his political activities, it is undoubtedly sufficient under international law to grant him refugee status. Article 33 of the Geneva Convention expressly prohibits States Parties from expulsion or rejection of a refugee across the borders of territories "where his life or freedom would be threatened because of his political convictions".

We would therefore like to thank the Ecuadorian government for granting political asylum to Julian Assange in its embassy in 2012 to defend freedom of speech and freedom of the press. We trust that the new government under President Lenín Moreno will continue to ensure the health and safety of Julian Assange in embassy asylum.

Ladies and gentlemen,

6. Julian Assange and Wikileaks made history. We have a moral obligation to prevent war crimes and uncover war crimes by informing. This is what Assange and Wikileaks have done. And for that Assange deserves a prize, no political persecution and no trial.

Our next steps in this case will include strengthening the international solidarity of parliamentarians with Assange and thus the freedom of the press. Because this is not about the person of Assange. This is about the right to publish information in the public interest. It is about our democracy. Therefore, 36 MPs from nearly a dozen European countries have written to U.N. General Secretary António Guterres, British Prime Minister Theresa May and Ecuadorian President Lenín Moreno.

7. We call on German Federal Foreign Minister Heiko Maas to show his attitude and to stand up for the health and safety of Julian Assange. By revealing secret documents, Julian Assange made public crimes committed by the US Army in the Iraq war, from which the then SPD-led Federal Government under Chancellor Gerhard Schröder had also distanced itself.

Thank you very much for your attention."

London, 20th December 2018