

## Assange's may surrender to British police

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In this Nov. 4, 2010 file photo, Wikileaks founder Julian Assange speaks during a news conference at the Geneva press club, in Geneva, Switzerland. Assange is a former computer hacker who has embarrassed the U.S. government and foreign leaders with his online release of a huge trove of secret American diplomatic cables. (AP Photo/Keystone, Martial Trezzini, File)

(AP) -- Julian Assange's lawyer was arranging to deliver the WikiLeaks founder to British police for questioning in a sex-crimes investigation of the man who has angered Washington by spilling thousands of government secrets on the Internet.

Lawyer Mark Stephens told reporters in London that the Metropolitan Police had called him to say they had received an [arrest warrant](#) from Sweden for Assange. Assange has been staying at an undisclosed location in Britain.

"We are in the process of making arrangements to meet with police by consent," Stephens said Monday, declining to say when Assange's interview with [police](#) would take place.

The 39-year-old Australian is accused of rape and sexual molestation in Sweden, and the case could lead to his extradition. He has denied the accusations, which Stephens has said stem from a "dispute over consensual but unprotected sex." The lawyer has said the Swedish investigation has turned into a "political stunt."

The pressure on WikiLeaks mounted from other quarters Monday: Swiss authorities closed Assange's bank account, depriving him of a key fundraising tool. And WikiLeaks struggled to stay online despite more hacker attacks and resistance from world governments, receiving help from computer-savvy advocates who have set up hundreds of "mirrors" - or carbon-copy websites - around the world.

In one of its most sensitive disclosures yet, WikiLeaks released on Sunday a secret 2009 diplomatic cable listing sites around the world that the U.S. considers critical to its security. The locations include undersea communications lines, mines, food suppliers, manufacturers of weapons components, and vaccine factories.

Pentagon spokesman Col. David Lapan called the disclosure damaging and said it gives valuable information to the nation's enemies.

"This is one of many reasons why we believe WikiLeaks' actions are irresponsible and dangerous," Lapan said.

WikiLeaks has been under intense international scrutiny over its disclosure of a mountain of classified U.S. cables that have embarrassed Washington and other governments. U.S. officials have been putting pressure on WikiLeaks and those who help it, and is investigating

whether Assange can be prosecuted under espionage law.

In what Assange described as a last-ditch deterrent, WikiLeaks has warned that it has distributed a heavily encrypted version of some of its most important documents and that the information could be instantly made public if the staff were arrested.

For days, WikiLeaks has been hounded by governments, hackers and companies that have forced it to move from one website to another. WikiLeaks is now relying on a Swedish host. But WikiLeaks' Swedish servers were crippled after coming under suspected attack again Monday, the latest in a series of such assaults.

It was not clear who was organizing the attacks, but WikiLeaks has blamed previous ones on intelligence forces in the U.S. and elsewhere.

WikiLeaks' huge online following of tech-savvy young people has pitched in, setting up more than 500 mirrors.

"There is a whole new generation, digital natives, born with the Internet, that understands the freedom of communication," said Pascal Gloor, vice president of the Swiss Pirate Party, whose Swiss Web address, [wikileaks.ch](http://wikileaks.ch), has been serving as a mainstay for WikiLeaks traffic.

"It's not a left-right thing anymore. It's a generational thing between the politicians who don't understand that it's too late for them to regulate the Internet and the young who use technology every day."

Meanwhile, the Swiss postal system's financial arm, Postfinance, shut down a bank account set up by Assange to receive donations after the agency determined that he provided false information regarding his place of residence in opening the account. Assange had listed his lawyer's address in Geneva.

"He will get his money back," Postfinance spokesman Alex Josty said.  
"We just close the account."

Assange's lawyers said the account contained about \$41,000. Over the weekend, the online payment service PayPal cut off WikiLeaks and, according to his Assange's lawyers, froze \$80,000 of the organization's money.

The group is left with only a few options for raising money now - through a Swiss-Icelandic credit card processing center and accounts in Iceland and Germany.

Monday marked the first day that [WikiLeaks](#) did not publish any new cables. It was unclear whether that had anything to do with the computer attacks.

**More information:** <http://wikileaks.ch>

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