

Free Assange and Manning! SEP and IYSSE to hold demonstration in Colombo

27 February 2020

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Sri Lanka are holding a demonstration in central Colombo on March 3 to demand the immediate and unconditional release of Julian Assange and Chelsea Manning. The demonstration is part of the global campaign being conducted by the International Committee of the Fourth International and the *World Socialist Web Site*.

A Sri Lankan SEP rally in defence of Assange in April, 2019

The show trial of WikiLeaks founder and publisher Assange, which began in a British court on February 24, is to extradite him to the US. Assange, who has not committed any crime, is incarcerated in Belmarsh Prison—otherwise known as Britain’s “Guantanamo”—and being held under brutal conditions that violate his fundamental democratic rights and threaten his life.

UN special Rapporteur Nils Melzer and top medical professionals have declared that Assange is being subjected to torture and could die if not released and placed under proper medical care. These warning have been ignored by US and British imperialism. If extradited to the US, the WikiLeaks publisher and Australian citizen will be found guilty of bogus espionage charges and given a life sentence of up to 175 years in the darkest corner of the US federal prison system.

Assange has been charged with publishing documents provided by whistleblower and former US soldier Chelsea Manning, proving war crimes committed by the US and other imperialist powers. Manning was arrested, tortured and imprisoned, serving seven years of a 35-year jail term before her sentence was commuted in 2017. She was jailed again for refusing to testify against the WikiLeaks founder. These

courageous individuals are being persecuted because they dared to Washington’s war crimes.

Over the past months numerous organisations around the world and millions of people have come to the defence of Assange. The working class must take the lead in this political struggle. It is the social force that can secure the release of Assange and Manning and defend freedom of speech and all basic democratic rights.

The SEP and IYSSE call upon workers, students, youth, artists, journalists and intellectuals to join the Colombo demonstration and support the international campaign.

Demonstration details:

Tuesday March 3, 4:00 p.m.

Outside Fort Railway Station in central Colombo.

To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

<http://www.wsws.org>