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MEDIA RELEASE

Liberty Victoria's 2011 Voltaire Award for free speech goes to Wikileaks and Julian Assange

Liberty Victoria has announced its 2011 Voltaire Award will be presented to Wikileaks and Julian Assange. The Voltaire award is given annually for distinguished contributions to free speech.

Liberty President, Professor Spencer Zifcak, said Liberty was proud to be continuing the Voltaire Award tradition. 'Free speech is a fundamental civil liberty. In standing for openness and accountability in government, Wikileaks has made a signal contribution to its advancement nationally and internationally'.

'Some people may not agree with everything that Wikileaks has done but no one can doubt its sincerity and courage, particularly in the face of powerful legal intimidation by many Western governments including our own'.

The Liberty Victoria Voltaire Award is presented annually to a person or organisation which has made an outstanding contribution to free speech. The 2010 recipient was the Melbourne International Film Festival for resisting Chinese Government attempts at censorship.

Previous recipients include GetUp!, Stephen Mayne, Margaret Pomeranz, Richard Ackland and Julian Burnside QC and Kate Durham. The Voltaire Award originated with the organisation 'Free Speech Victoria', which merged with Liberty Victoria in 2009.

The Voltaire award dinner will take place on Saturday 6th August this year, at San Remo Ballroom, Carlton. The award ceremony will be addressed by Professor Stuart Rees, Director of the Sydney Peace Foundation at the University of Sydney. (Prof. Rees CV at http://www.spf.arts.usyd.edu.au/cv_01.shtml)

Tickets are available now, full details on the website of Liberty Victoria.

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