

Coordinated by



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We, the undersigned Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) partners, whistleblowing, human rights, transparency and journalist organisations are alarmed by the ongoing extradition proceedings against Jonathan Taylor in Croatia. On 4<sup>th</sup> January 2020 the Dubrovnik County Court again ruled to extradite Jonathan to Monaco. In October 2020, the Croatian Supreme Court had partially sustained his appeal against an earlier decision in favour of extradition by the Dubrovnik Court.

**As Jonathan Taylor continues to fight his case in the Croatian courts, we call on the Croatian and Monegasque authorities to immediately and unconditionally end the extradition proceedings against him; we call on the UK Government to intervene with their Croatian and Monegasque counterparts on Jonathan Taylor's behalf; and we call on the European Parliament to condemn this ongoing harassment of an important whistleblower.**

Jonathan Taylor, a UK citizen who blew the whistle on a massive bribery scheme in the offshore oil industry, has spent 174 days and counting detained in Croatia fighting extradition to Monaco on the basis of a retaliatory complaint filed against him by his former employer, SBM Offshore.

At the request of the the Monegasque authorities Interpol recently withdrew the arrest warrant for "corruption and blackmail" but Monaco are still pressing for Jonathan's extradition so that they can 'interrogate' him over alleged offences arising from a complaint lodged against him in 2014 by SBM Offshore after Jonathan had blown the whistle in 2013. Jonathan Taylor's lawyers argue the complaint against him is without any merit and the request to extradite extraordinary given it does not meet the required legal threshold to be fulfilled. An Interpol Red Notice alert can only be issued to arrest someone for extradition if they fall within one of two categories. Either the individual is:

- a) *awaiting a trial* - ie. prosecution for an offence for which he or she has been formally charged - or
- b) the individual has *already been convicted* of crime and is wanted in order to serve their lawful sentence.

Neither condition is fulfilled with respect to Jonathan Taylor – he has not been charged for any offences in Monaco or anywhere else. In fact, the only "crime" Jonathan Taylor appears to have committed was to blow the whistle and to cooperate with prosecuting authorities in four separate countries, the UK, the US, Brazil and the Netherlands, in their investigations into the criminal conduct of SBM Offshore. These investigations resulted in record fines against the company to the tune of \$827 million USD and the conviction of [two](#) former CEOs of [SBM Offshore for fraud-related offences](#).

And yet Jonathan Taylor is now well into his sixth month trapped in Croatia, in a Kafkaesque nightmare, separated from his family during a global pandemic and unable to work to support himself or them. This is wholly unacceptable. Despite the fact that the original Red Notice alert should never have been issued in the first place, the Dubrovnik County Court has once again found that legal (procedural) requirements for extradition have been fulfilled. The Court states that additionally, it was reassured by the Monaco authorities in writing that Mr. Taylor will not face

torture or capital punishment and the UK's National Crime Agency have no interest in extraditing Jonathan because he's not wanted for anything

While we fully support Jonathan Taylor in his appeal to the Supreme Court of Croatia we remain appalled at the treatment that has been meted out to him, an important whistleblower who revealed massive corruption in the offshore oil industry. At a time when the world needs more people willing to disclose wrongdoing that seriously harms our economic, social, political and environmental well-being, it is clear that the treatment of public interest whistleblowers like Jonathan Taylor must be seen clearly for what it is really is - a litmus test on whether our democratic systems can survive.

The massive bribery scheme SBM Offshore was involved in was part of the Operation Car Wash scandal that brought down the Brazilian government, with severe and ongoing consequences for that country and its people. But this is still only the tip of the proverbial (and melting) iceberg. It must not be forgotten that climate change and the destruction of the planet's natural resources and resilience is the biggest threat to our survival and well-being. We need the oil and gas industry to turn their efforts away from exploiting the earth's natural resources by whatever means they can, including corruption, and to focus on sustainable and responsible sources of energy. We need them to do this now.

Jonathan should not suffer any further for his whistleblowing compounded by a disinterested legal system that is proceeding on an extradition request based on a flawed Red Notice alert that itself was the result of a criminal complaint that should never have been made and which SBM Offshore company has [stated](#) it is no longer pursuing.

In fact the treatment of Jonathan Taylor should be cause for great outrage for the global community as we need more whistleblowers to come forward about serious corruption in this time of serious crisis.

We call on the UK Government make an urgent request to the Croatian and Monegasque authorities to end this extradition process immediately on the grounds that a) in law, the Red Notice alert should never have been issued and b) to protect the health and well-being of Jonathan Taylor, a UK citizen, whose human rights and rights as a protected whistleblower continue to be seriously infringed as long as this unjust process continues and he remains in stuck in Croatia.

Further, we call on the European Parliament to make a statement to condemn the treatment of Jonathan Taylor as a direct attack on the credibility of the European anti-corruption agenda and the spirit of the new [EU Directive on the protection of whistleblowers](#).

Signed by:

African Centre for Media & Information Literacy (Nigeria)

ARTICLE 19

Association of European Journalists-Belgium

Blueprint for Free Speech

Campax/SwissLeaks (Switzerland)

Centre for Free Expression (Canada)

Civil Society Europe

Confédération Française démocratique du travail des cadres (CFDT Cadres)

The Daphne Caruana Galizia Foundation (Malta)

European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (Germany)

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 The Good Lobby - Belgium  
 Government Accountability Project (USA)  
 Guernica 37 International Justice Chambers  
 Legal Human Academy (Denmark)  
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 Mighty Earth (USA)  
 NGO Shipbreaking Platform (Belgium)  
 OBC Transeuropa (Italy)  
 Oživení z. s. (Czech Republic)  
 Pištaljka (Serbia)  
 Protect (UK)  
 The Signals Network (US/France)  
 South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO)  
 SpeakOut SpeakUp Ltd (UK)  
 Spotlight on Corruption (UK)  
 Transparency International  
 Transparency International EU  
 Transparency International Ireland  
 Transparency International Italy  
 Peter Matjašič, Senior Program Officer, Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIFE) (Spain)  
 Professor David Lewis, School of Law, Middlesex University (UK)  
 WhistleblowersUK  
 Whistleblowing International Network  
 Mary Robinson MP, Chair of UK All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for whistleblowing  
 Kevin Hollinrake MP, co-chair of UK APPG for whistleblowing  
 Rt. Hon. The Baroness Susan Kramer, co-chair UK APPG for whistleblowing

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 This statement was coordinated by the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR), which tracks, monitors and responds to violations of press and media freedom in EU Member States and Candidate Countries. This project provides legal and practical support, public advocacy and information to protect journalists and media workers. The MFRR is organised by a consortium led by the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF) including ARTICLE 19, the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), Free Press Unlimited (FPU), the Institute for Applied Informatics at the University of Leipzig (InfAI), International Press Institute (IPI) and CCI/Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso Transeuropa (OBCT). The project is co-funded by the European Commission


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