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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) partners, whistleblowing, human rights and transparency organisations, and international jurists welcome the decision of the Supreme Court of Croatia to revoke the first-instance court decision, which allowed for the extradition of whistleblower, Jonathan Taylor to Monaco. While the case must now return to the Dubrovnik Court, we call on the Court to do the right thing and allow Jonathan Taylor to return home to the United Kingdom without delay.

In 2014, Mr Taylor blew the whistle on a [\\$275 million international network of bribes](#) paid by his former employer, the oil platform company SBM Offshore, to secure oil contracts around the world. The evidence he provided to the UK Serious Fraud Office, and investigators in Brazil and the Netherlands as well as the FBI and the Department of Justice in the United States, helped ensure SBM Offshore was fined over \$800 million.

Notwithstanding the evidence of wrongdoing available to the authorities in Monaco where SBM Offshore is headquartered, the company has never been investigated for wrongdoing in that country. Instead, the Monegasque authorities accepted, and have continued for six years to pursue, a criminal complaint filed in 2014 against Jonathan Taylor by SBM Offshore accusing him of bribery and corruption. Despite the case being rejected by a Monegasque court two years ago it was resurrected, and earlier this year, Monaco requested an Interpol Red Notice which resulted in Jonathan Taylor's arrest at Dubrovnik Airport on 31 July 2020 just as he arrived for a short holiday with his family. Released on bail five days later, Mr. Taylor has now spent over 80 days in limbo unable to leave the country, forced to fight for his freedom through the Croatian legal system. Jonathan Taylor's life is on hold, and his ability to work and provide for his family is in jeopardy.

The case against Jonathan Taylor is yet another example of how the Interpol red notice system can be abused to target and intimidate whistleblowers, journalists, and other essential public watchdogs. It is also an example of how national legal systems are used by powerful entities to silence and punish those who dare to disclose information in the public interest (otherwise known as [Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation, or SLAPP](#) suits).

Last week, the Parliamentary Assembly for the Council of Europe (PACE) General Rapporteur on the Protection of Whistleblowers, Pieter Omtzigt, issued a [statement](#) calling on the Monaco authorities to cease their persecution of Jonathan Taylor, stating that "Monaco's recourse to the Red Notice procedure for this purpose is an abuse of procedure exactly of the kind the Parliamentary Assembly condemned in its earlier reports on the misuse of Interpol." Mr. Omtzigt added, "The relentless persecution even of successful whistle-blowers like Mr Taylor is unacceptable. It has a chilling effect on all those who come across threats to the public interest and consider alerting us, for the sake of our health and safety, and the fight against corruption and crime."

We continue to call on the Dubrovnik court to ensure that Jonathan Taylor and his family are free to return home. However, this is not enough; we demand that SBM Offshore officially drop their criminal complaint against Jonathan Taylor and for the Monaco authorities to formally withdraw their extradition request and all charges against him.

Signed,

Organisations

European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)

European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)

Free Press Unlimited

The Guernica Group

Protect

Whistleblowing International Network (WIN)

Individuals

Cathy James, *Solicitor and former Chief Executive of Public Concern at Work (now called Protect)*

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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