



The Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP

Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
and First Secretary of State

Brussels, 19th of November 2020

Dear Foreign Secretary Raab,

We are writing to you in connection with the case of Mr. Jonathan Taylor, British citizen who, back in 2014, revealed that his former employer, Dutch multinational SBM Offshore, had paid \$275 million-worth of bribes to foreign governments around the world, such as for instance in Angola, Brazil, and Equatorial Guinea, in order to secure oil industry contracts.

The investigations that Mr. Taylor set into motion, due to the evidence he has provided to the UK Serious Fraud Office, resulted in penalties against the Monaco-based company totalling more than \$800 million, imposed through out of court settlements reached with the Dutch and Brazilian authorities.

Mr. Taylor was arrested on an Interpol warrant by Monaco on the 30th of July 2020, at the Dubrovnik Airport, when he arrived in Croatia with his wife and three children for holidays. The Interpol red notice issued by Monaco only this year was based on an allegation against him of “bribery and corruption”. The allegation stems from a 2013 complaint filed in Monaco by SBM Offshore that Mr. Taylor tried to extort money from the company while negotiating compensation for leaving. The claim was already rejected by a local court in Monaco in 2018 and Mr. Taylor affirms that it was part of a wider strategy by his former employer to discredit him.

Mr. Taylor was subsequently released on bail on the 3rd of August, but has been forced to remain in Croatia without his passport pending the outcome of the legal proceedings.

We find it profoundly unjust that no person allegedly involved in this global corruption scheme is facing legal consequences, whilst Mr. Taylor, the whistleblower who uncovered it all, has had to experience arrest and is now stuck in a legal limbo in Croatia.

The European Parliament has constantly worked towards improving protection for whistleblowers and encouraged and defended them around the world, as they play a critical role in uncovering acts of corruption and in revealing other forms of wrong-doing that can harm public interest. The fundamental importance of whistleblowing is now fully recognised in the European Union and was recently codified in the EU Whistleblowing directive (EU 2019/1937 of 23 October 2019). We firmly believe that the courageous actions of whistleblowers must be appreciated and rewarded and that there should be safeguards against reprisals from former employers. For the European Parliament it is thus essential to promote an ethical culture helping to ensure that whistleblowers will not suffer retaliation.

We therefore appeal to you to do everything in your power to help Mr. Taylor. The Croatian Supreme Court backed his claims on the 12th of October, but it also set conditions requiring the UK to actively intervene in order to enable him to return to his family in the UK.

We are aware that it is a matter of policy for the UK not to intervene in judicial processes taking place in a foreign country. And we in the European Parliament as well we highly value judicial independence, but we do believe that in the specific case of Mr. Taylor, where there is a risk of abuse of process and/or denial of justice, the UK authorities should intervene and allow him to come home to his family.

Finally, we ask you to consider carefully the chilling message this situation would send to whistleblowers and investigative journalists all over the world. If Mr. Taylor would be extradited and face trial in Monaco, whereas none of the perpetrators in Monaco have even faced police questioning, this will have a serious deterrent effect for whistleblowers and investigative journalists alike. They should be supported and encouraged, not punished.

We are looking forward to your reply.
Yours sincerely,

Ramona Strugariu, Member of the European Parliament, Renew Europe, Romania

Daniel Freund, Member of the European Parliament, Greens/European Free Alliance, Germany

Karen Melchior, Member of the European Parliament, Renew Europe, Denmark

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Member of the European Parliament, Greens/European Free Alliance, France

Stelios Kouloglou, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left, Greece

Marie Toussaint, Member of the European Parliament, Greens/European Free Alliance, France

Abir Al-Sahlani, Member of the European Parliament, Renew Europe, Sweden

Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Vice-President of the European Parliament, Non-attached, Italy

Ernest Urtasun, Member of the European Parliament, Greens/European Free Alliance, Spain

Sabrina Pignedoli, Member of the European Parliament, Non-attached, Italy