



MEDIA RELEASE:

Iceland And Namibia Need To Do More To Ensure Fishrot Suspects Are Held Accountable

WINDHOEK/REYKJAVIK, 8 June 2022 - Transparency International Iceland (TI-IS) and the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) in Namibia welcome the ongoing visit of a team of Namibian investigators and prosecutors to Iceland to discuss cooperation regarding prosecutions in the Fishrot corruption scandal.

We are also encouraged by the simultaneous visit of a delegation led by Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Namibia's Minister of International Relations, to Iceland this week.

TI-IS and the IPPR hope the visit of the International Relations Minister can be used as an opportunity for the two governments to boost cooperation on tackling corruption in both countries and, in particular, the need to seek accountability in the Fishrot case.

Reports that Prosecutor General Martha Imalwa and Deputy Director General of the Anti-Corruption Commission, Erna van der Merwe, are also in Iceland meeting with Icelandic investigators and prosecutors augur well for possible cooperation in this transnational criminal investigation.

This mutual cooperation is in line with Namibia's and Iceland's commitments under the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), which both countries have signed and ratified.

We note that as of June 7 2022, Namibia has not yet formally delivered its request for the extradition of three Icelandic suspects wanted in Namibia in relation to Fishrot. We urge that the Minister of Justice in Namibia, Yvonne Dausab, make her decision known regarding extradition

as soon as possible, in the interest of justice and due process of law, having special regard to Article 44 of UNCAC (which deals with extradition matters).

Citizens of both countries have expressed, through public protests, news investigations and civil society efforts, that it cannot be right that only Namibian citizens are held legally accountable for Fishrot, when the corruption scandal clearly involved individuals in Iceland as well.

*This is a joint statement issued by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) in Namibia and Transparency International Iceland. Both organisations are collaborating in seeking international accountability for the Fishrot corruption scandal.

*Background note: The Fishrot corruption scandal involves allegations that a major Icelandic fishing company, Samherji, paid millions of dollars in bribes to a group of Namibian politicians and businessmen in return for highly lucrative fishing quotas over a period of seven years - from 2012 to 2019. At present 10 suspects, including two former Cabinet ministers, have been arrested in Namibia and are awaiting trial in connection with the scandal while at least eight suspects are under investigation in Iceland. As yet, no Icelandic citizens have been charged in Iceland in relation to the case while Namibia has named three Icelandic suspects, senior figures in Samherji, that it wants to appear in court in Windhoek alongside the Namibian accused. The Namibian government is reported to be in the process of finalising its extradition request for the three Icelandic suspects.

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