

Frankfurt am Main, 26 July 2024

## Open letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice of Denmark

**Subject: Arrest of Paul Watson by the Danish Police in Greenland on grounds of a politically motivated Red Notice issued by Japan**

Dear Minister for Foreign Affairs Lars Løkke Rasmussen,  
Dear Minister of Justice Peter Hummelgaard,

The GMVV & Co. GmbH is a strategic think tank, registered with the Parliament of the European Union and the Commission in the EU Transparency Register under Section IV, specialized in research in the field of criminal law and justice in connection with the protection of human and civil rights. We are writing in cooperation with the non-profit Faust Kultur Foundation, which promotes literature, arts and culture to strengthen democratic pillars in modern society, regarding the arrest of Paul Watson by Danish police in Greenland when the Captain Paul Watson Foundation ship, the *John Paul DeJoria* docked for refueling.

Environmentalist Paul Watson was arrested in Greenland under a politically motivated Interpol Red Notice issued by Japan over ten years ago. The political motivation of Japan and Costa Rica to prevent Paul Watson from traveling through international arrest warrants is well known. Costa Rica has dropped its charges against Watson. Due to this background, many countries do not execute the international arrest warrant. Now, however, the Danish police in Greenland have ignored this unwritten rule, as Germany did in 2012. The Red Notice is believed to be linked to Watson's previous interventions against whaling in the Antarctic.

Watson was taken into custody in the port of Nuuk, the capital of the Danish autonomous territory, and is to be brought before a district court, which will decide on his possible extradition to Japan. The Captain Paul Watson Foundation reported that more than a dozen police officers boarded the ship and took Captain Watson away in handcuffs. The ship was on its way to the North Pacific with 25 volunteer crew members to stop a Japanese whaling ship.

In 2008, Australian customs officials captured images as part of a surveillance operation to gather evidence of illegal whaling that contradicted Japan's claim that the whales were being caught for scientific research. These images included an adult and a young minke whale with fatal wounds, reportedly caused by an explosive-filled harpoon, being pulled aboard the Japanese whaling ship NISSHIN MARU, which until 2023 was part of the Japanese whaling fleet. The images showed the dead protected minke whales on the deck of the Japanese whaler NISSHIN MARU that was falsely labeled as a "research vessel". Its bigger and faster successor,

the whaling mother ship and modern slaughter factory ship KANGEI MARU, poses a global threat to whales and marine life in a new scope since May 2024.

Europe, and Denmark as part of the EU, has banned whaling. Paul Watson's conservationist efforts against the illegal killing of protected whales in international waters by the Japanese whaling fleet, and the protection of our oceans is in the European and Danish public interest. Against the background of the political motivation behind Japan's Red Notice against Paul Watson, we do not understand why Denmark acts as an enforcer for the Japanese whaling industry when no other country has felt compelled to do so since the Red Notice was issued.

Please take a stand against the extradition of Captain Watson to Japan. In 2012, Germany had arrested Paul Watson on grounds of a politically motivated Red Notice issued by Costa Rica. This arrest was not just, which is why Interpol has officially erased the Red Notice from its system and Costa Rica dropped its charges against Captain Watson after a change of government, which highlighted the clear political motivation of Costa Rica at the time. The world is watching closely, and as politicians, writers, researchers and lawyers who monitored the German arrest of Paul Watson closely, we believe that Denmark will do the right thing and will not proceed on grounds of a politically motivated Red Notice that is an abuse by Japan of the Interpol Red Notice system.

**We call on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice of Denmark to acknowledge that the Interpol Red Notice issued by Japan is politically motivated and as such does not comply with Interpol standards and should not be executed.**

**We also call on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice of Denmark to acknowledge that the arrest of Paul Watson and the possible extradition to Japan on grounds of this politically motivated Red Notice is unsubstantiated.**

**In conclusion, we call on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice of Denmark to immediately release Paul Watson and to reject Japan's extradition requests as politically motivated.**

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