

Statement by Swiss authorities on the money-laundering investigation against Musa Aman, Chief Minister of the Malaysian State of Sabah, 20th April 2012

(Original in German, translation by the Bruno Manser Fund)

Question as submitted to the Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland, by the Zurich-based Sunday weekly, Sonntagszeitung, 20th April 2012:

„The Malaysian politician Musa Aman, Minister of the State of Sabah, is in the centre of a corruption case in Malaysia and Hong Kong. Hong Kong’s anti corruption authority has compiled a report on the case. It is alleged that, through nominees, Aman has received a total of 90 million dollars of corruption payments from logging companies in return for granting logging concessions. Allegedly, these funds have been laundered through a network of companies and deposited on UBS accounts in Hong Kong and Zurich. Lawyer Richard Christopher Barnes and businessman Chia Tien Foh have been mentioned as nominees. These occurrences date back to the years 2006 to 2008.

My question is the following one: Has the Office of the Attorney General led an investigation for suspected money-laundering or other criminal offences in this context?“

Reply by Jacqueline Bühlmann, spokesperson for the Office of the Attorney General, 20th April 2012:

„The Office of the Attorney General has in this context provided legal assistance.

The result of the legal assistance enforcement has been forwarded to the Federal Office of Justice on 29th March 2012 for transmission to the requesting authorities in Hong Kong.

The Office of the Attorney General does not inform on the content or the enforcement of the legal assistance request. As legal assistance enforcement authority, we generally do not answer questions on investigations led abroad. The authority on information lies with the foreign criminal prosecutors in charge.“

Statement by Folco Galli, Head of Information of the Swiss Federal Office of Justice, 20th April 2012

„With the delegation of a legal assistance request to the enforcement agencies, the information lead is passed on to these agencies. I can only add that, on 31st March 2011, the Federal Office of Justice has transmitted the legal assistance files, as collected by the Office of the Attorney General, to the requesting authority in Hong Kong.“

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