



## We call on President Geingob

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The Namibian community reeled when the executive director of Namrights Phil ya Nangoloh made public that high-level officials and politicians were involved in the scourge of rhino poaching in the country. The public demanded to know the names, saying that if it is indeed so, wealthy Namibians, part of the so-called elite, are plundering the natural resources of the country. In the North, the former Oshana Regional Commander Commissioner Ndahangwapo Kashihakumwa, who was in charge of the first anti-poaching task team in Etosha, was implicated by the rumour mill and categorically denied these allegations. Police chief Lieutenant-General Sebastian Ndeitunga came out and said that if the names were made public, he would arrest anyone if there was proof of involvement. Even the Minister of Environment, Pohamba Shifeta, dared Ya Nangoloh to make the names public. And yet, to date, Ya Nangoloh has refused to supply the powers that be with his research. Are we surprised? Not really. From what we understand, the anti-poaching task team is in disarray, each member with his or her own agenda. Thus far, only four apparent 'kingpins' of poaching are on trial for their crimes. The others, so-called 'fall guys' who pulled the trigger or transported the contraband. We know that poverty fuels the little guy to involve himself. We also know that their families are taken care of while they sit out their jail sentences. We know too, that international syndicates are involved in the poaching of rhino in the sub-region. What surprises us is why President Hage Geingob has not weighed in yet – not at least as far as we know. Ya Nangoloh says Ndeitunga knows who they are. Ndeitunga says he does not. We need the president to get involved to either expose Ya Nangoloh's claims as rubbish or, to name and shame those who are involved and to prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law. The President needs to make haste on this and he needs to tell the Namibian nation that he is dealing with this issue. This country, and its reliance on tourism, cannot afford any further delays. The matter needs to be handled now, as a matter of urgency. And with transparency.