



## Two Chinese granted bail

### Charged with possession of rhino horns

05 April 2017 | Justice

The two Chinese nationals who were arrested in January for possession of rhino horns worth more than N\$400 000 were granted bail of N\$300 000 each yesterday.

Yonghui Lu, 41, and Nan Chen, 29, appeared before Magistrate Venessa Stanley in the Windhoek Magistrate's Court and the case was postponed to 21 June for further investigation.

The two were charged with possession of and dealing in controlled wildlife products.

Their lawyers, Kadhila Amoomo and Mbushandje Ntinda, asked the court to grant their clients bail, arguing that they were not a flight risk.

After summing up all the evidence presented during the bail hearing Stanley said the charges against the two were not punishable by a direct prison sentence and she therefore granted them bail.

The two men were arrested on 19 January around 22:00 at Berghoff Flats in Eros, Windhoek, after a joint operation by the Namibian Police and Windhoek City Police. In their possession, the police found two rhino horns valued at N\$404 000.

Items found alongside the rhino horns were described as a "rhino poaching kit", including hunting rifles, bullets and other items.

The defence lawyers argued that the police could not prove that their clients had been in possession of the rhino horns stashed in the flat. According to them, several people had access to the flat.

Prosecutor Rowan van Wyk unsuccessfully opposed the granting of bail on the grounds that the two men faced serious charges and the State had a strong case against them.

This came just days after the minister of environment and tourism, Pohamba Shifeta, had tabled the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Amendment Bill.

This amendment provides for hefty fines and lengthy prison sentences for possession of and trading in controlled wildlife products. Foreigners found guilty of committing these crimes will not be allowed back into Namibia after paying the fines or serving their prison terms.

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(<https://d3rp5jatom3eyn.cloudfront.net/asse-chinese-granted-bail2017-04-050.jpg>)

OUT: Chinese nationals Nan Chen and Yonghui Lu have been released on bail. Photo: FILE