



**WILDLIFE DIRECT**

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**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**WildlifeDirect calls on Tanzania to expedite investigations on the brutal murder of Wayne Lotter**

**Nairobi- August 18, 2017:** We are deeply shocked and saddened by the tragic news of Wayne Lotter's murder on Wednesday evening. We offer our condolences to his family and friends. Wayne Lotter's work was vital because of the rate of elephant poaching in Tanzania, which has decimated populations by over 75% in just 5 years.

Mr. Lotter is considered a conservation hero for his role in the recent success in bringing wildlife criminals to justice in Tanzania. Of great concern to us is the impact of his killing on the ongoing prosecution of the ivory queen. His murder exposes the true deadly nature of ivory cartels and the risks that all working against them face. We call on the Tanzanian government to expedite investigations on this killing and to provide personal security for all investigators, prosecutors, and judicial officers involved in the ongoing ivory queen's case and others.

We also urge the Chinese government to increase their level of support towards mutual legal assistance to the Tanzanians to help crush the ivory cartels that are plundering the country's elephants. All Tanzanians should be alarmed that this murder could undermine efforts to stem the killings.

*"WildlifeDirect calls on international NGOs to create a reward for information leading to the arrest of Wayne Lotter's killer to help the authorities."* Paula Kahumbu, CEO WildlifeDirect.

*"In this crisis we will lose some of the best people who are pursuing justice against the criminals who are plundering Tanzania's elephants. We must not let this incident cause us to lose the faith but rather use the death of Wayne Lotter to justify redoubling our efforts."*

Richard Leakey, Founder of WildlifeDirect

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WildlifeDirect is a Kenya and US registered charitable organization founded by Richard Leakey with a US Board and Kenya Board. WildlifeDirect campaigns for justice for wildlife to ensure Africa's magnificent wildlife endure forever.

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