

Public Communications Brief – Alfa Nero Yacht Lawsuit Response

1. Formal Summary of Government’s Position

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda (GoAB) emphasizes that the seizure and sale of the Superyacht Alfa Nero were conducted lawfully, transparently, and with full international cooperation. The GoAB firmly maintains that the lawsuit filed in the United States by Ms. Yulia Guryeva-Motlokhov – regarding the Alfa Nero – is baseless, malicious, and an abuse of legal process. This legal action is viewed as a “fishing expedition” aimed not at genuine discovery but at harassing senior Antiguan officials and tarnishing the country’s reputation.

Every step in handling the Alfa Nero was above-board, done in accordance with Antiguan law and with approval from the U.S. Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). Importantly, the sale of the Alfa Nero was carried out under an official OFAC license after the yacht was removed from the U.S. sanctions list. It was sold in July 2024 to a vetted buyer for US \$40 million, and all proceeds were transparently accounted for and used for public purposes. There is no evidence whatsoever of any “missing” money or corrupt payments – claims to the contrary are entirely unfounded. The Government has published detailed financial records of the sale and expenditures, which refute any suggestion of impropriety.

Ms. Guryeva-Motlokhov – the daughter of a sanctioned Russian oligarch, Andrey Guryev – has no legal ownership stake in the Alfa Nero, yet she has pursued multiple court actions after the sale did not go in her favour. The GoAB views her U.S. lawsuit as a vindictive attempt to intimidate and extort the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. Having failed in Antigua’s courts to halt or reverse the yacht’s sale, she is now trying to use U.S. courts to cast aspersions on Prime Minister Gaston Browne and others, hoping to compel a huge monetary settlement. Her allegations of corruption are unsubstantiated hearsay and have been categorically denied and disproven by the facts.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda remains committed to full transparency in Antigua and Barbuda and globally and also to cooperation with international partners. We have kept U.S. authorities informed at every stage and even formally requested that U.S. Treasury/OFAC confirm our full compliance with all sanctions’ requirements. Any objective review of the evidence will vindicate Antigua and Barbuda’s actions and expose the lawsuit’s claims as false. We will continue to engage constructively with the United States and all relevant parties to ensure the truth is recognized and to protect Antigua and Barbuda’s good name.

2. Explanation of Engaging U.S. Counsel

Even though the Government of Antigua and Barbuda (GoAB) and its officials are not formal defendants in the U.S. court action, they have engaged attorneys in the United States as a protective and proactive measure. This step is crucial to safeguarding the country's reputation in the face of the calumnies and slanderous claims that have been submitted to the U.S. Court.

In these proceedings, the claimant has sought subpoenas targeting financial records of the Prime Minister and other Antiguan officials, held by third-party U.S. institutions, namely the Federal Bank of New York and the Clearing House Company. Such discovery requests may cast unwarranted suspicion on Antigua and Barbuda's institutions, risking reputational harm and affecting the country's ability use the banking system to send and receive money internationally. By retaining counsel, the Government can directly contest the misrepresentations and protect its institutions and their officials from false or misleading allegations.

Although the Government and its officials are not named as defendants, being identified in a discovery filing can still damage a nation's credibility and undermine public confidence, especially when accusations of wrongdoing are spread widely in media and political discourse. By proactively engaging U.S. legal experts, Antigua and Barbuda ensures its voice is heard in the proceeding. If necessary, counsel can move to quash or limit subpoenas that lack valid legal basis or that aim to propagate slanderous statements rather than obtain legitimate evidence.

Taken together, this engagement of U.S. counsel underscores Antigua and Barbuda's determination to defend its good name, protect its officials from unfounded allegations, and affirm the Government's lawful conduct in the Alfa Nero matter. It also signals respect for the U.S. judicial process while ensuring that no one-sided narrative goes unchallenged.

3. Summarized Legal Context

Engaging U.S. attorneys is a normal and prudent step when foreign governments or individuals are identified in American legal proceedings- even if they are not direct defendants. Under U.S. law, someone involved in a foreign dispute can request discovery from U.S.-based institutions, which may inadvertently pull in parties who had no direct role in the lawsuit itself.

By retaining U.S., those impacted parties—including the Government of Antigua and Barbuda—ensure they can promptly respond to any broad or intrusive requests, assert their rights, and challenge speculative or unjustified subpoenas.

Simply put, having U.S. legal representation prevents unfair outcomes, and ensures that any misrepresentations can be swiftly corrected before a U.S. judge. This is not an

admission of wrongdoing; it is a standard legal safeguard to preserve due process, protect the nation's reputation, and uphold the integrity of its officials.

4. Impact of Opposition Allegations and harm to the Nation

While the Government is prepared to refute all baseless allegations regarding the Alfa Nero, it is important to note that certain elements of the Opposition are repeating these claims for political gain. Unfortunately, these actions harm the nation's reputation and can negatively impact the economy, the banking system and job.

The following points are crucial:

- International Perception and Investment:
Publicly echoing false and unproved claims of corruption risks discouraging foreign investors, international lenders, and partners who are key to Antigua and Barbuda's growth and stability.
- Financial Services and Banking Sector:
Allegations of impropriety may erode confidence in local financial institutions, adversely impacting banking relationships, increasing compliance burdens to the banks and raising costs to clients, and potentially driving away investment that sustain jobs.
- Tourism and the Wider Economy:
Negative headlines tying Antigua and Barbuda to alleged corruption can weaken the country's appeal to tourists and luxury yacht patrons. Tourism and related services are economic mainstays that support thousands of families.
- Employment and Livelihoods:
As economic opportunities shrink, job creation is threatened. Hotel staff, port workers, tourism vendors, and many others may feel the impact of reduced economic activity linked to damaged international credibility.

The Government urges all parties to act in the nation's best interests by grounding public discourse in facts and evidence rather than unverified allegations. By perpetuating these unfounded claims, the Opposition is not only undermining the reputation of Antigua and Barbuda but also serving the purposes of Ms. Guryeva-Motlokhov and risking harm to the livelihoods of everyday citizens and the broader economy. Seeking political mileage should not come at the expense of patriotism and the country's hard-won economic development and international standing.

5. Key Talking Points for Public Outreach

Lawful Seizure of Alfa Nero and International Approval

- The Alfa Nero was lawfully seized by Antigua and Barbuda authorities after being effectively abandoned by its sanctioned owner, posing a grave hazard to the harbour in which it was moored and threatening jobs and revenue from the Yachting industry.
- This was done in close consultation with the United States – the yacht was removed from the U.S. sanctions list so it could be disposed of legally under an OFAC license.

Transparent Sale Process

- The yacht was sold in July 2024 for US \$40 million in a private sale, fully transparent and cleared by U.S. authorities. (See: *Attachment 1: Notarised Bill of Sale*)
- The buyer was thoroughly vetted for any criminal or sanctions concerns, and OFAC was informed of the buyer's identity with no objections.

All Proceeds Accounted For

- Every dollar from the yacht's sale is accounted for. The net amount received by the Government was US \$38.2 million, after the broker's commission. (See: *Attachment 2: Broker Agreement*)
- Those funds were deposited into the Government's account at the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank and allocated for public purposes, including Alfa Nero-related expenses and reducing government debt. (See: *Attachment 3. Finance Ministry Accounting*)

No Evidence of Corruption

- Allegations that Prime Minister Browne or any other persons secretly profited are completely false and unsupported.
- No credible evidence backs up these accusations, which come primarily from an investigator who was hired and paid by Ms. Guryeva-Motlokhov to produce a report citing unnamed sources. The report does not stand up to standards of evidence in any Court.
- The Government has published all financial documents showing the transaction's transparency.

Claimant's Lack of Rights & Motives

- Yulia Guryeva-Motlokhov has no legal claim to the yacht. She was, at best, a discretionary beneficiary of a Trust associated with her sanctioned father's assets. The discretionary beneficiary of a Trust does not own the Trust's assets.
- She failed to block the sale in Antigua's courts and is now attempting to use U.S. court actions to harass Antigua's officials and create suspicion, hoping for a payoff.

Contesting Baseless U.S. Legal Manoeuvres

- The New York action is not a direct lawsuit against the Government; it is a fishing expedition seeking bank records in the desperate hope to find something to support unfounded allegations.

- Similar subpoenas were filed in Florida against the brokerage firm involved in the sale. Significantly, the Florida lawsuit against the Brokerage company has not been pursued. The company, Northrop & Johnson Yachts-Ships LLC, is internationally known and respected with offices in the US, France, the UK and elsewhere.

Public Interest First

- The Government's primary concern was protecting the public interest, especially given the high costs of maintaining the Alfa Nero yacht and potential disastrous risks if it remained in port.

- Selling the yacht quickly and lawfully converted a stranded asset into a public benefit and safeguarded the economy from potential harm.

Ongoing Transparency & Cooperation

- The Government has nothing to hide. It has shared information proactively with the U.S. authorities and published the pertinent documents.

- A government memorandum to the U.S. Treasury details every fact of the Alfa Nero matter, inviting further review.

Sanctions Implications

- If Ms. Guryeva-Motlokhov regained control over the yacht's value, it could potentially benefit her sanctioned father.

- She may be attempting to channel sanctioned assets, which undermines international sanctions.

Questions & Answers (Q&A)

Q: Has the Prime Minister or Government of Antigua and Barbuda been sued?

A: No. Neither the Prime Minister nor the Government itself is a defendant in the U.S. lawsuit. The filing in New York is a request for discovery from U.S. financial institutions, not a lawsuit for damages or wrongdoing by our Government.

Q: What is the Government's response to corruption allegations?

A: The Government and the Prime Minister categorically deny them. No credible evidence has ever been presented, and we have published all relevant financial records. These allegations rely on hearsay from a private investigator who was hired and paid by Yulia Guryeva-Motlokhov to produce a baseless report which has no corroborating sources and cannot withstand scrutiny.

Q: Where did the money from the Alfa Nero sale go?

A: The entire US \$40 million was paid by a fully vetted buyer. The broker's commission was 4.5%, leaving US \$38.2 million. These funds were placed in the Government's account, used to cover Alfa Nero expenses (which the Government had already borne), and then applied to public debts. Every disbursement is documented.

Q: Who is the claimant, and what is her motive?

A: The claimant, Yulia Guryeva-Motlokhov, is the daughter of Russian oligarch Andrey Guryev, who is under U.S. sanction, as well as sanctions from the UK and the EU. She was never an owner of the yacht but claims entitlement through a Trust linked to her father's assets. She appears to be using U.S. courts to harass Antigua and Barbuda's officials and extort money.

Q: Why was the yacht sold for \$40 million instead of the \$60 million previously mentioned at auction?

A: The auction with the higher bid fell through once the claimant launched legal action, scaring off potential bidders. Under mounting costs and hurricane risks, the Government accepted the best available offer of \$40 million in a private sale, which was vetted and approved.

Q: If Government and its officials are not named in the lawsuit, why engage U.S. Lawyers?

A: Engaging Counsel is Standard Procedure: Retaining lawyers in the United States is a standard precaution when our Government's name is drawn into a U.S. legal matter. We have a duty to defend Antigua and Barbuda's interests in any court, anywhere. This proactive step is about protecting our country's good name, not about hiding anything.

Not a Sign of Wrongdoing – A Sign of Determination: Hiring U.S. attorneys does not indicate that government officials have done anything wrong. In fact, it's because the

allegations are baseless that Government and others must fight them strongly, so that misinformation does not go unchallenged.

Protecting National Reputation and Transparency: Our government is completely confident in the legality and transparency of the Alfa Nero sale and how the funds were handled. We have nothing to hide. By appearing in the U.S. court, our counsel can present the evidence and facts that confirm everything was above board

6. Sample Quotes for Speeches and Media statements

- “Every penny from the Alfa Nero sale is accounted for and used for the public good – not a cent is missing or misused.”
- “Antigua and Barbuda acted by the book in the Alfa Nero matter – with U.S. approval at every step. No flashy lawsuit can rewrite those facts.”
- “This baseless lawsuit is nothing more than the sanctioned oligarch’s family trying to bully Antigua and Barbuda with false claims. We will not be intimidated.”
- “Let’s be clear: these allegations of secret pay-offs are pure fiction. The records are open, and the facts speak for themselves.”
 - “We couldn’t let a derelict superyacht threaten our harbour, our economy and the jobs of our people. We took responsible action – and we did so transparently and lawfully.”
- is a desperate attempt at extortion, plain and simple. Antigua and Barbuda’s Government will stand up against such blatant extortion.”
- “The daughter of a sanctioned oligarch is upset she couldn’t reclaim his yacht, so now she’s slandering our officials. It’s outrageous and we will resist it”.
- “We refuse to let false or slanderous claims go unchallenged—engaging U.S. attorneys is simply the best way to defend our nation’s reputation in the U.S. courts.”
- “Although we aren’t the ones being sued, our name is being dragged into the proceedings. By hiring counsel, we protect Antigua and Barbuda’s image and ensure no baseless allegations stand.”
- “We have a duty to our citizens to uphold the country’s good name. If someone lodges damaging claims in a U.S. court, we will not sit by; we will respond vigorously, through legal representation.”
- Retaining American lawyers isn’t about admitting fault—it’s about making sure the truth is heard, and that Antigua and Barbuda’s interests are safeguarded.”

- “When accusations are levelled in any jurisdiction, we confront them head-on. That’s why we have engaged U.S. counsel, to ensure a fair hearing and to counter any unfounded allegations.”

7. Sample public responses to the Opposition Party

“Political point-scoring shouldn’t cost us our nation’s reputation. These baseless allegations only serve to scare off investors and harm our people’s livelihoods.”

“When the Opposition spreads rumours of corruption, it isn’t just the Government that is a victim —every hotel worker, every bank teller, and every dock worker in Antigua and Barbuda feels the impact, from the undermining of the nation.”

“International partners and investors want stability and truth. The Opposition’s repetition of unproven accusations jeopardize jobs, our financial sector, and the well-being of the very people they claim to represent.”

“This Government welcomes political debate, but malicious rumours that undermine Antigua and Barbuda’s credibility end up punishing the innocent - families, businesses, and workers across our islands.”

“Our economic growth depends on global confidence. By perpetuating unfounded claims, the Opposition is not attacking the Government alone; they’re risking the livelihoods of every citizen.”

“It appears that certain individuals in the UPP would rather see Antigua and Barbuda reduced to dust if it means seizing power. Their agenda clearly serves personal ambition over national interest.”