


# Monaco: an investigation opened after the questioning on the Internet of relatives of Prince Albert

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A host of messages by email, SMS or via WhatsApp have been falling on social networks for ten days. Their targets: several relatives of Prince Albert of Monaco. A preliminary investigation was opened in Monaco and entrusted to the Principality's police after filing a criminal complaint, according to the Monegasque prosecution.

These messages refer to websites based abroad, including one called “Les Dossiers du Rocher”. They denounce the practices of “Monegasque personalities, politicians and influential businessmen”, with the ultimate goal of “manipulating and influencing the institutions of Monaco in their own interests”, explained Thursday the daily Monaco-Matin (group Nice- Morning).

Didier Linotte, president of the Supreme Court of the Principality, Laurent Anselmi, government advisor-Minister of External Relations, as well as two relatives of Prince Albert II, his lawyer Thierry Lacoste and Claude Palmero, the administrator of his goods.

## Sites hosted in Iceland and the United States

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The various sites, which take the form of fake media, are hosted in Iceland and the United States according to a source familiar with the matter. Via their publications, they question “the probity and loyalty” of the four men, the accusations being then relayed on social networks by accounts created for this operation.

The investigation was opened after the filing of a criminal complaint in Monaco by Me Marie-Alix Canu-Bernard, lawyer for the four people concerned, in particular for “violation of correspondence” and “violation of professional secrecy”. The lawyer filed “additional complaints due to new broadcasts,” she said.

In addition, civil complaints were filed Wednesday in Paris, in particular for “defamation”, “false accusations” and “slandorous accusations”, we learned from Me Luc Brossollet, who defends Thierry Lacoste, while his partner Olivier d'Antin defends Didier Linotte. Regarding Thierry Lacoste, “another complaint will be filed tomorrow (Friday) for violation of correspondence and hacking,” said Me Brossollet.

## Prevent a government reshuffle?

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The Prince's Palace, contacted by AFP, did not give an official reaction, referring to the interview granted by Prince Albert in Monaco-Matin, in which he condemned a "defamatory and anonymous campaign of rumors that targets several servants of the Principality".

According to a source familiar with the matter, this campaign aims to "destabilize the Principality and take control of the Rock" and "prevent a series of appointments and a government reshuffle" envisaged at the end of November, just after the National Day on November 19. On this occasion, according to the same source, Prince Albert would like "to separate from old truck drivers in local politics to thoroughly renew the government team and bring out new talents".