



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTING FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS

Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

ICSFT URGES AN INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATION IN THE CASE OF DISAPPEARED SAUDI JOURNALIST JAMAL KHASHOGGI



ICSFT calls on the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances to launch an official investigation in the case of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who remains missing for more than a week now and was last seen entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey.

Khashoggi went to the consulate to obtain a document he needed to get married. “More than five hours after the consulate had closed, his friend and fiancée were still waiting outside the consulate in the dark for Mr. Khashoggi to



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come out¹”, and still has not been seen after that to date. There are conflicting reports regarding his disappearance, the Turkish authority has released a concluding report that he was assassinated at the consulate, while the Saudi authorities vehemently deny this allegation and claim he left the consulate the same day he arrived.

Jamal Khashoggi, a USA resident, is a well-known journalist and commentator criticizing the oppressive Saudi Arabian regime after leaving the country last year for fear of being arrested, after being banned from writing in the media and even posting on social networks. His disappearance is not an isolated or far-fetched incident as Saudi authorities’ waged harsh crackdown on Saudi Journalists and bloggers.

Since 2017 alone, more than 15 journalists and writers criticizing the regime have been arbitrarily detained and tortured with complete disregard to international human rights standards, as of now close to 30 journalists and citizen journalists are detained in Saudi Arabia. More often than not, these rights violations have never been officially confirmed by the responsible officials, and the whereabouts and charges against these dissidents’ remains to be unknown.

Saleh el Shihi, Esam al Zamel, Turad Al Amri, Fayez ben Damakh are a few examples of the regimes harsh treatment of citizen dissidents who criticize the regimes draconian oppressive laws and policies that reinforce injustice and inequality. As well Loujain al-Hathloul, a prominent women’s rights activist, was arrested on a highway in the United Arab Emirates and flown home to be jailed in Saudi Arabia.

Therefore Khashoggi’s disappearance falls under the context of Saudi’s ongoing reprisal against human rights defenders, journalists, political oppositions, scholars, and public figures for exercising their right to freedom of expression

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/02/world/middleeast/journalist-saudi-consulate-istanbul.html>



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and association. This ruthless act of arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance of dissidents is the regimes way of silencing anyone that contradicts the fake political and human rights reform in the country- the government in particular the new crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman, has spent billions of dollars in PR to push ahead a fake socio-economic, political, and human rights reform in Saudi Arabia.

The UN Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Expression and Extrajudicial Executions, and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances released a statement expressing their concern at Khashoggi's disappearance and allegations of state-sponsored murder as a result of his criticism of Saudi Arabian regime. After reiterating their call to Saudi Arabia to allow citizens their basic human rights including, the right to expression and association, they called for an independent international investigation in relation to Khashoggi's disappearance.

The EU committee on human rights issued a [statement](#) regarding Khashoggi's disappearance urging Saudi authorities to disclose his whereabouts. In the statement the committee calls on the EU and its members to respond strongly and reassess their relationship with Riyadh, including military sales in the event that the preliminary conclusions of the Turkish authorities' investigation pointing to an assassination are confirmed.

ICSFT shares these concerns and calls, and urges for an independent international investigation to determine as quickly as possible what has happened to Khashoggi. We do not accept Saudi Arabia's rehearsed claim that Khashoggi left the consulate of his own free will and then vanished into thin air.

Saudi Arabia's impunity for its human rights violations must end, and the regime should be held to account now.