

The Country of Saudi Arabia has had a long history of alleged human rights violations. Many different people have accused Saudi Arabia of funding terrorist during the September 11th attacks on the United States.<sup>1</sup> Al-Qaida's leader, Osama Bin Laden, was also the son of a prominent Saudi millionaire. There have also been leaks with alleged records of ties between the Saudi government and terror organizations. In 2010, the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, accused the Saudis of being a financial hub for terrorist groups.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the speculation over terrorist connections, Saudi Arabia also has many strict policies against freedom of speech. There are at least thirty prisoners in Saudi Arabia who are only under arrest for exercising their right to free speech and assembly.<sup>3</sup> Saudi Arabia does not allow for independent media, and journalists in the country are subjected to massive amounts of scrutiny.<sup>4</sup> In addition to the accusations of oppression of free speech, there are alleged incidents of unfair or unjust jailings. There are accusations that detainees in Saudi Arabia are not being informed of why they are under arrest, and are apparently being kept away from legal council and family. According to a US state department report, the state security president,<sup>5</sup> a department that deals with accusations of terrorism and countering them, has been holding prisoners for extended periods without legal council or judicial proceedings.<sup>6</sup>

There have also been accusations of unnecessary casualties in Saudi Arabia's air campaign over Yemen. Saudi Arabia began an airstrike campaign over the country of Yemen after militants took over the government.<sup>7</sup> As of August 2018, there had been 6,592 civilian deaths, and 10,741 civilians wounded from Saudi airstrikes. There have also been multiple reports of unlawful attacks on homes, hospitals, and schools, which all count as war crimes. There was even an alleged incident where a Saudi air strike hit a bus full of children.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Henceforth referred to as US

<sup>2</sup> "[All the atrocities Saudi Arabia committed before outrage over Jamal Khashoggi's death reached a fever pitch](#)" Business Insider

<sup>3</sup> "[One Year After Khashoggi Killing, Saudi Activists Honor his Legacy by Continuing to Fight for Freedom of Expression](#)" Amnesty International

<sup>4</sup> "[All the atrocities Saudi Arabia committed before outrage over Jamal Khashoggi's death reached a fever pitch](#)" Business Insider

<sup>5</sup> Henceforth referred to as SSP

<sup>6</sup> "[Saudi Arabia 2018 Human Rights Report](#)" US State Department

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> "[Saudi Arabia Events of 2018](#)" World Report 2019

In 2018, Saudi Arabia also launched a massive campaign to jail major feminists and women's rights activists within the country. This isn't the first case of major protesters and political activists.<sup>9</sup> Many countries around the world have alleged an extensive history of silencing protestors and critics of the royal family, and of the government in Saudi Arabia. A recent example that some point to was the assassination of Jamal Khashoggi. Khashoggi was a journalist for the Washington Post and was highly critical of the Saudi Government. On October 2nd, 2018, he was murdered in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey. There is no confirmation that the Saudi government and its powerful crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman<sup>10</sup>, had anything to do with the murder; however, many believe that it was the crown prince who was behind the murder.<sup>11</sup>

Despite their history, the Saudi government has been making promising steps towards modernizing. On June 24th, 2018 the country lifted its infamous ban on female drivers. This was just one of the changes that the crown prince, MBS, has promised to make during his reign.<sup>12</sup> MBS also wants to move the country away from their oil-dominated economic system, reform the government of Saudi Arabia, and modernize the country for the twenty-first century and beyond.<sup>13</sup> Further details of these plans are contained in the Saudi Vision 2030 plan released by MBS and the Saudi government.

With the direction the country is currently heading, verses the past that they have had, it is easy to question if international intervention is necessary. As the Human Rights Council, you will be engaging in a deeper discussion about the state of human rights in Saudi Arabia and producing a resolution that gives the findings of the HRC as well as the solutions that the council suggests.

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Henceforth referred to as MBS

<sup>11</sup> "[Jamal Khashoggi: All you Need to Know About Saudi journalist's Death](#)" the BBC

<sup>12</sup> "[Saudi Arabia Lifts Ban On Female Drivers](#)" NPR

<sup>13</sup> "[The High Cost of Change Repression Under Saudi Crown Prince Tarnishes Reforms](#)" Human Rights Watch

## Work Cited

- “The High Cost of Change Repression Under Saudi Crown Prince Tarnishes Reforms.” Human Rights Watch. November 4, 2019. Accessed December 5, 2019. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/11/04/high-cost-change/repression-under-saudi-crown-prince-tarnishes-reforms#page>
- “Jamal Khashoggi: All You Need to Know About Saudi Journalist’s Death.” The British Broadcasting Corporation. June 19, 2019. Accessed on December 5, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45812399>
- “One Year After Khashoggi Killing, Saudi Activists Honor his Legacy by Continuing to Fight for Freedom of Expression.” Amnesty International. October 1, 2019. Accessed on December 1, 2019. <https://www.amnestyusa.org/press-releases/one-year-after-khashoggi-killing-saudi-activists-honor-his-legacy-by-continuing-to-fight-for-freedom-of-expression/>
- Perper, Rosie. “All the Atrocities Saudi Arabia Committed Before Outrage over Jamal Khashoggi’s Death Reached a Fever Pitch.” Business Insider. October 22, 2018. Accessed on December 1, 2019. <https://www.businessinsider.com/saudi-arabia-human-rights-violations-atrocities-before-jamal-khashoggi-2018-10>
- “Saudi Arabia 2018 Human Rights Report.” United States Department of State. 2018. Accessed on December 1, 2019. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/SAUDI-ARABIA-2018.pdf>
- Roth, Kenneth. “Saudi Arabia Events of 2018.” Human Rights Watch. 2018. Accessed on December 1, 2019. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/saudi-arabia>
- Van Sant, Shannon. “Saudi Arabia Lifts Ban on Female Drivers.” June 24, 2018. Accessed on December 5, 2019. <https://www.npr.org/2018/06/24/622990978/saudi-arabia-lifts-ban-on-women-drivers>