



ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ ПАРЛАМЕНТ PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EVROPSKÝ PARLAMENT EUROPA-PARLAMENTET
EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT EUROOPA PARLAMENT ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN PARLAIMINT NA HEORPA EUROPSKI PARLAMENT PARLAMENTO EUROPEO
EIROPAS PARLAMENTS EUROPOS PARLAMENTAS EURÓPAI PARLAMENT IL-PARLAMENT EWROPEW
EUROPEES PARLEMENT PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI PARLAMENTO EUROPEU PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN
EURÓPSKY PARLAMENT EVROPSKI PARLAMENT EUROOPAN PARLAMENTTI EUROPAPARLAMENTET

Klaus Buchner

Europäisches Parlament ASP 04E205,
Wiertzstr. 60, 1047 Brüssel, Belgien

Federica Mogherini
High Representative/Vice President of European Commission
Rue de la Loi
Wetstraat 200
1049 1049 Brussels, Belgium

14 July 2016

Dear Ms. Mogherini,

RE: On the death penalty for juveniles in Saudi Arabia

We are writing to you regarding the upcoming GCC-EU Ministerial Meeting on 19 July 2016 in Brussels. We believe that this meeting presents an important opportunity to address the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's practice of executing juveniles, in particular the cases of Ali al-Nimr, Abdullah al-Zaher, and Dawood al-Marhoon.

As you know, in October, the European Parliament passed an urgency resolution regarding Mr al-Nimr's case, which called on the External Action Service and Member State Governments "to use all their diplomatic tools and efforts to immediately stop this execution." Like Mr al-Nimr, Mr al-Zaher and Mr al-Marhoon have both been sentenced to death for crimes they allegedly committed while they were still under 18. All three young men were arrested on charges related to the exercise of their freedoms of speech and assembly, were subjected to torture to extract confessions, and received patently unfair trials before the Specialised Criminal Court.

Earlier this year Ali al-Nimr's uncle, a prominent opposition activist and cleric, Sheikh Nimer Baqir al-Nimr was executed on 2 January with 46 others in a single day. Sadly, subsequent investigations have shown that among those executed were at least four people who were also juveniles, including Ali al-Ribh, another teenager arrested from his school for his role in political protests and tortured into "confessing" to crimes of which he was subsequently executed.

klaus.buchner@europarl.europa.eu - www.klaus-buchner.eu - www.facebook.com/prof.dr.klausbuchner

www.twitter.com/Dr_KlausBuchner

B-1047 Brüssel - Tel. +32 2 28-45739 - Fax +32 2 28-49739

F-67070 Straßburg - Tel. +33 3 881-75739 - Fax +33 3 881-79739

Europäisches Parlament ASP 04E205, Wiertzstr. 60, 1047 Brüssel, Belgien

We deeply regret that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continues to issue death sentences against juveniles, in contravention of its international obligations arising as a State member of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the body of experts tasked with reviewing State compliance to the treaty, expressly called on Saudi Arabia in March to immediately revoke the death sentences of juveniles sentenced to death¹. To date, Saudi Arabia has failed to respond to the UN.

International NGOs have estimated that Saudi Arabia has executed at least 12 juvenile since 2013. This includes 4 persons who were sentenced to death under the age of and executed during the mass execution on 2 January 2016. Finally, Reprieve and the European Saudi Organisation for Human Rights are currently investigating the case of up to 8 juvenile offenders have been sentenced to death under similar circumstances as Mr Nimr, Mr al-Zaher and Mr al-Marhoon.

We note with approval the statement issued by your office following the mass execution on 2nd January, confirming that the EU is opposed to capital punishment in all cases and will continue to consistently call for restricting its scope to the most serious crimes, in line with UN minimum standards, and ultimately for its universal abolition. We believe the upcoming GCC-EU Ministerial Meeting provides an excellent opportunity to build on previous actions and statements on this issue.

We therefore ask that you seek assurances from the Government of Saudi Arabia that

1. No executions of juveniles sentenced to death will be conducted;
2. All death sentences issued by Saudi courts against juvenile offenders will be immediately reviewed;
3. A public declaration by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be made commuting the death sentences issued against Ali al-Nimr, Abdullah al-Zaher, and Dawood al-Marhoon.
4. All efforts will be made to respond to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and comply with Saudi Arabia's obligations arising out of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Yours sincerely,

Klaus Buchner MEP (Greens/EFA)
Santiago Fisas Ayxela MEP (EPP)
Prof. Dr. Dietmar Köster MEP (S&D)
Louis Michel MEP (ALDE)
Mark Demesmaecker MEP (ECR)
Fabio Massimo Castaldo MEP (EFDD)
Fabio De Masi MEP (GUE/NGL)
Brando Benifei MEP (S&D)
Javier Nart MEP (ALDE)
Bodil Valero MEP (Greens/EFA)
Frédérique Ries MEP (ALDE)
Ana Gomes MEP (S&D)
Anneliese Dodds MEP (S&D)
Helga Stevens MEP (ECR)
Ivo Vajgl MEP (ALDE)
Isabella Adinolfi MEP (EFDD)

¹ See the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child official List of Issues, available at: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fSAU%2fQ%2f3-4&Lang=en
