



Ms. Ine Eriksen Søreide
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
7. Juni-Plassen 1,
0251 Oslo, Norway
utenriksminister@mfa.no

December 22, 2020

Dear Minister Søreide,

I'm writing on behalf of Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN), an organization founded by the late Jamal Khashoggi before his murder by Saudi government agents, and the undersigned organizations, to officially request that the Norwegian Government releases the names of the ten-man Saudi security team who [reportedly](#) arrived in Norway in the summer of 2018 to work at the Saudi Arabian embassy.

Saudi Arabia reportedly requested that Norway register the security guards as diplomats in the country, a move that would have provided them with full immunity under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. According to [Dagbladet](#), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs denied the request for all but one of the ten Saudi agents, who now works as Head of Security at the Saudi Arabian embassy.

As [reported](#) by The Guardian in May 2019, the CIA notified the Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) about a possible threat from the Saudi government to a Norway-based political refugee and human rights activist Iyad El-Baghdadi around the same time that the ten-man Saudi security team arrived in Norway. After receiving the CIA's warning, the PST took El-Baghdadi to a safe house for his protection.

Please accept this letter as an official request for information under the Norwegian Freedom of Information Act (Offentleglova – offl). As stipulated in Chapter 2, Section 3 of the act, “[a]ny person” may request information from Norwegian government agencies. Releasing the names of the ten Saudi security agents is in the interest not only of the undersigned organizations but also in the public interest of the Norwegian people and the international community.

In October of this year, DAWN and Khashoggi's widow Hatice Cengiz filed a civil [lawsuit](#) as co-plaintiffs against Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and 28 other top Saudi



officials over the journalist's 2018 killing in Istanbul. We believe that cross-checking the names of the ten Saudi agents with the suspected culprits in Khashoggi's murder will help us in our quest for accountability for Khashoggi's murder by better understanding the respective roles of specific defendants and whether any of them sought diplomatic immunity in Norway. We further believe that releasing the names will help Norway, the Norwegian people, and the international community better understand the modus operandi of the Saudi regime in its deployment of security agents worldwide and provide the Norwegian people with critical information in assessing its own country's relations with Saudi Arabia.

Please keep in mind that the information we are requesting is not confidential or private. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs regularly publishes [a list of all foreign diplomats](#) accredited to Norway. All Saudi Arabian diplomats are publicly listed. By applying for diplomatic visas, the Saudi Arabian government and the ten men were expecting to be publicly listed.

We thank you for your collaboration, and we will follow up with you in five business days.

Respectfully,
Sarah Leah Whitson
Executive Director
Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)
Cell/WhatsApp/Signal: +1 (718) 213-7342
www.dawnmena.org
Twitter: @sarahleah1

cc:
State Secretary [Audun Halvorsen](#);
Secretary General [Tore Hattrem](#)

Cosigners:

- Bethany AlHaidari, [Saudi American Justice Project](#)
- Husain Abdulla, [Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain](#)
- Sunjeev Berry, [Freedom Forward](#)
- Stephen McInerney, [POMED](#)
- Paul Kawika Martin, [Peace Action](#)
- Hassan Al-Tayyab, [FCNL](#)
- Medea Benjamin, [CODEPINK](#)
- Victoria Ross, [Western New York Peace Center](#)
- Nick Mottern, [Know Drones](#)