

Blair Refuses to Cancel Lucrative Deal with Saudi Despite Khashoggi Murder

By [Middle East Monitor](#)

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Tony Blair has resisted calls to end his multi-million dollar deal with Saudi Arabia despite allegations that the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi may have been authorised by the Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Salman.

[Accounts published last month](#) by the Tony Blair Institute confirmed that Blair had received donations of up to \$12 million from the kingdom for a deal with the Crown Prince to support his modernisation programme for the kingdom.

The agreement was said to be the first major deal to have emerged involving the Tony Blair Institute, which Blair established in 2016 after winding down his commercial operations.

While there had calls for Blair to end his arrangement with Mohammed Bin Salman over the ongoing war in Yemen, the [killing](#) of *the Washington Post* journalist earlier this month in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, has put further pressure on the former prime minister to cut all ties with Riyadh.

Blair's insistence on maintaining his financial ties to the Saudi government makes him "complicit" in crimes committed by the Saudi government, Labour MP for Brighton Kemptown, Lloyd Russell Moyle, told *Business Insider*. Moyle was responding to Blair's refusal earlier in the month to terminate his business relations with the Saudis saying that the kingdom had "issued a very strong denial" of their responsibility.

The issue over whether Blair would continue to work with the Saudi regime following the Kingdoms admission that Khashoggi had been killed by agents thought to be close to MBS, was raised once again. A spokesperson for the Blair institute told *Business Insider*: "We have nothing further to add to what Mr Blair has said previously".

Blair had [expressed concern](#) over Khashoggi when news of his disappearance broke earlier this month. He said to *Reuters* "this issue [the killing of Khashoggi] has to be resolved because otherwise it runs completely contrary to that process of modernisation".

A source close to Blair is said to be "following events closely" in the country.

In contrast to Blair, the current Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has called for Western leaders to cut ties with Saudi Arabia in response to Khashoggi's killing.

"The issues that have come to light of the death in Istanbul of a Saudi national who was visiting the embassy call into question the close relationship with

Saudi Arabia of so many Western countries,” Corbyn told CNN.

Despite being members of the same party, Corbyn and Blair are bitter rivals. The current leader has expressed his desire to put Blair on trial for the mistakes he had made over the war in Iraq. On the issue of his ongoing deal with the Saudis one of Corbyn’s allies described Blair’s reluctance to cut his ties to the regime as “absolutely immoral” and made him “complicit in war crimes” committed by the Saudis in Yemen.

“If Mr Blair doesn’t see the light and continues to accept money from the Saudis then I think his moral integrity is in ruins,” Lloyd Russell Moyle, the Labour MP for Brighton Kemptown, told BI.

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Featured image: Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of the UK addresses the World Travel & Tourism Council Asia Summit on 10 September 2013 [World Travel & Tourism Council/Flickr]

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