

Despotic Saudi Regime Lobbies to Chair UN Human Rights Council

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It's one of the world's most repressive states – a blight on humanity, a cancer in a part of the world known for despotic regimes.

Its human rights record is horrific by any standard. Fundamental rights don't exist.

State terror is official policy. Democracy is strictly prohibited. Torture and physical abuse are commonplace. So are public whippings, beheadings and hangings.

Due process and judicial fairness don't exist. Thousands of political prisoners languish in its gulag under deplorable conditions.

Abuse of power is extreme. So is massive corruption and lack of transparency. Inequality is institutionalized. Independent media don't exist. Nor do labor rights.

Islam is the state religion. No other is tolerated. All Saudis are required by law to be Muslims. Failure to comply is considered apostasy – a capital offense.

Capital punishment is standard practice for non-violent crimes – including adultery, armed robbery, drug smuggling, kidnapping, witchcraft, sorcery, and apostasy.

Absolute monarchical rule tolerates no criticism or opposition. It's despotic, lawless and brutal – a police state by any standard.

Riyadh is Washington's main Arab regional ally.

The UN Human Rights Council includes 47 Member States. Many comprise a rogue's gallery of major human rights abusers – including Saudi Arabia, America, Algeria, Ethiopia, Morocco, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, among others.

Membership is apportioned regionally as follows:

African nations – 13 seats

Asia/Pacific: 13 seats

Latin America and Caribbean – 8 seats

Western Europe and other states – 7 seats

Eastern Europe – 6 seats.

Members serve for three years. They're not eligible for immediate reelection after serving two consecutive terms.

General Assembly Res. 60/251 (April 2006) states:

“(T)he Council shall be responsible for promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equal manner...”

“(T)he Council should address situations of violations of human rights, including gross and systematic violations, and make recommendations thereon...”

Most often HRC mocks what it's mandated to support. It functions as a US imperial tool – notably siding with Washington-backed takfiri terrorists waging war on sovereign Syria. Failing to condemn US-orchestrated/Saudi-led terror-bombing of Yemen.

Reports indicate Riyadh wants to chair the UN Human Rights Council (HRC). One human rights group called letting Riyadh head the HRC an “abomination, and cynical by a nation that beheads people in public squares.”

It's like letting a serial killer become police chief or a pyromaniac being appointed fire commissioner.

Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom criticized Riyadh's human rights record – including its treatment of blogger Raif Badawi.

He was sentenced to 1,000 lashes, 10 years imprisonment and possible capital punishment – for freely expressing his views.

Wallstrom said “(o)ne must protest against what are (punitive) medieval methods.”

Riyadh responded by refusing to issue business visas to Swedish nationals or renew current ones. It tolerates no criticism of its horrific practices – even from a high-ranking diplomat like Wallstrom.

In January she tweeted: Riyadh's “cruel attempt to silence modern forms of expression has to be stopped.”

Independent human rights groups condemn Riyadh's record as one of the world's most egregious for good reason.

Human rights in the Kingdom don't exist. Saudi Arabia is included in HRC's Asian group. One of its member states is next in line for HRC's chairmanship.

Reports indicate Riyadh is lobbying intensively to get it. Washington is supportive. US pressure may get other Asian nations to back what demands rejection.

Appointing it head of the human rights group would make the organization a laughing stock. Don't bet against it happening.

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