

Saudi Arabia commits War Crime by Forced Use of Prisoners in Syria Insurgency

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This report originally published in 2012 sheds light on Saudi support for the jihadist terrorist insurgency in Syria including the Islamic State (ISIS)

An official and classified Saudi Arabian document reveals that the government of Saudi Arabia releases its most dangerous prisoners who are sentenced to death under the condition that they take part in the attempted subversion in Syria. The practice constitutes a serious war crime. Earlier in 2012 PRESS TV and Al Alam journalist Maya Naser was assassinated shortly after he began investigating the same crime being committed by the Turkish authorities.



Document from Interior Ministry leaked to media

The official, classified document shows that the authorities of Saudi Arabia have ordered the release of a group of the most dangerous criminals who have been sentenced to death in exchange for going to fight in Syria. Prior to their deployment to Syria the convicts are to be trained in unconventional warfare, terrorism, or in what is euphemistically described as Jihad.

The group of convicts includes 105 Yemeni, 21 Palestinian, 212 Saudi, 96 Sudanese, 254 Syrian, 82 Jordanian, 68 Somali, 32 Afghan, 194 Egyptian, 203 Pakistani, 23 Iraqi and 44 Kuwaiti citizens. It is unlikely that this group is the only such group that is going to be deployed from Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia's release of convicts with death sentences and their forced use as insurgents is a gross violation of the Geneva Conventions, which among other regulate the wartime rights of civilian and military prisoners. Their deployment to Syria is likely to constitute forced use of prisoners and could potentially lead to a prosecution of the Saudi government at the International Criminal Court in The Haag.

According to the US Special Forces Training Circular TC 18-01 the US military will for the foreseeable future be predominantly involved in irregular warfare. (1) Post 25th NATO Summit NATO doctrine, which describes the illegal war on Libya as a teachable moment and model for future interventions has underpinned this tendency. (2) It is thus not surprising that Saudi Arabia is not the sole country within the anti-Syria alliance that deploys convicts.

In September 2012 PRESS TV and AL Alam journalist Maya Naser was killed by snipers in Damascus when he reported from the scene of two bomb blasts in Damascus. According to reliable sources the snipers have been positioned two hours before the blasts. It is highly probable that the targeting of Maya Naser and the timing was no coincidence.

During the week prior to his assassination, Maya Naser was investigating Turkey's forced use of prisoners. Naser began his investigation after it transpired that several of the killed or captured insurgents in Syria were convicts who, according to their sentences should be incarcerated in Turkish prisons. (3) Naser had copies of several passports to substantiate the claim.

Some of the killed or captured Turkish convicts had ties to Al Qaeda associated organizations. One of the more prominent, among these convict insurgents, was the brother of the leader of the 2003 HSBC bombers. The bombing of the HSBC bank in Istanbul in 2003 killed 67 and wounded more than 700 people. The Saudi document indicates that the forced use of prisoners in Saudi Arabia and Turkey is part of a GCC-NATO strategy rather than isolated incidents.

The evidence provided by Maya Naser and the Saudi Arabian document warrant an investigation and prosecution of Turkey, Saudi Arabia as well as against NATO at the International Criminal Court, ICC.

Whether any of the war crimes will be investigated or prosecuted, however, is more than just uncertain. For one it is unlikely that any of the western nations will demand an investigation or prosecution. For the other, both Russia and China are most likely considering the already very tense bilateral and multilateral relations between respectively Russia, China and the USA, UK and France. Iran, which is currently chairing the Non Aligned Movement is under sustained pressure from the USA, Canada, the EU and its Gulf-Arab neighbors. The Tehran government is likely to think twice before it risks worsening diplomatic relations to the west.

In other words, Turkey's, Saudi Arabia's and NATO's blatant violations of the Geneva Conventions, their forced use of prisoners and state sponsored terrorism is likely not to be noticed by the ICC, which ten years after the Rome Statute has exclusively prosecuted, imprisoned and sentenced heads of state and government officials who dared to oppose US, EU and NATO hegemony.

If the document ever makes it into western mainstream media, which also is highly doubtful, it may cause a half-baked scandal and it may be used for scapegoating and positioning the one or the other with the implicit purpose of justifying or covering up ones own crimes. It will hardly result in an investigation, prosecution, or a cessation of state sponsored terrorism and forced use of prisoners.

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