



## Statement for "Autocrat Fair," event of the Stand with Human Rights and Democracy Campaign October 27, 2020

Provided by [Democracy for the Arab World Now](#) (DAWN), founded by the former journalist and activist Jamal Khashoggi shortly before his murder

President Trump has called the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammed Bin Salman a “friend.” Jared Kushner has called him a “good ally” of the United States. MBS is certainly close to the US if you measure such things by arms sales. Saudi Arabia accounted for an astounding [25%](#) of total US arms sales from 2015-2019.

MBS is something else too – the brutal dictator of Saudi Arabia who has waged war against his people at home, and caused the largest humanitarian [crisis](#) in the world.

The Yemen war is the [brainchild](#) of MBS. He launched it just after he became defense minister in 2015, with no strategy, and no regard for human life. Since 2015, the war has resulted in the death or injury of more than [20,000](#) Yemeni civilians, and the starvation of over [85,000](#) Yemeni children. Much of this death and destruction has been dealt out with US arms and assistance.

At home, MBS has turned Saudi Arabia into an authoritarian [police state](#) in which peaceful activists, like the women’s rights activist [Loujain Alhathloul](#), are jailed and tortured. Saudi Prosecutors seek the death penalty against peaceful dissidents such as the prominent cleric [Salman Alodah](#), on absurd charges, such as “inducing corruption on earth.” Under MBS’ direction, Saudi authorities often hold hostage the family members of dissidents living abroad, either [banning](#) them from travel outside the country or [imprisoning](#) them outright.

Not content with imprisoning activists at home, MBS has also threatened, harassed and murdered Saudi activists living abroad, including DAWN’s founder Jamal Khashoggi. The Saudis lured Jamal to Istanbul late 2018, then sent a hit squad to kill him in the Saudi Consulate.

If the polls are correct, President Trump will be defeated on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Unfortunately, US support of Saudi Arabia has been unwavering through Democratic and Republican Administrations. We at DAWN will do our best to change that.