

Saudi Arabia Initiates a Court Devoted to Human Rights, NOT Satire!

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The announcement of the establishment of an Arab Court of Human Rights, indeed any Court devote to Human Rights, should be an internationally welcomed initiative.

The fact that the initiative has come from the Shoura Council of Saudi Arabia, the formal one hundred and fifty strong legislative advisory body, unelected and all appointed by the King, raises many unanswered questions:

The Shoura Council is giving final touches to the draft statute of the Arab Court of Human Rights.

To be based in Bahrain, the court will have independent judges and provisions enforceable in all member states. ...

The amendments also involve adding an article that empowers the Court to impose temporary or transitional measures for the protection of complainants in urgent cases to prevent irreparable damage from being inflicted on victims.

... According to official sources, the Court will seek to promote the human dignity, justice, equality and the rule of law in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the Arab Charter on Human Rights.

The court will consist of seven judges comprised of nationals from the member states, and a president will be elected for a term of four years. The employees of the Court will enjoy the privileges granted to the representatives of the member States of the Arab League.

According to its bylaws, the Court will consider and resolve all disputes arising from the application and interpretation of the Arab Charter on Human Rights or any other Arab agreement in this regard. ([Arab News](#), Feb 23, 2016)



“Promote the human dignity, justice, equality and the rule of law”

The main question might be, will any Saudi official involved in human rights violations not to mention State support of terrorist organizations in Syria, Iraq, be called to account to the Court?

Today, just five days after the announcement, below, added to Saudi’s woeful human rights record, has been the sentencing of a twenty eight year old man to ten years in prison and 2,000 lashes for expressing his atheism on Twitter.

Last August Amnesty International’s Report “Killing in the Name of Justice” concluded that in twelve months, on average one person was put to death every two days. The majority of executions are carried out by beheading. Last year posts for eight extra executioners were advertised to help cope with the increasing number of death sentences

The role, posted on the civil service jobs portal, was described as “executing a judgment of death” – as well as performing amputations on those convicted of lesser offences. Executed bodies are sometimes displayed in public. Execution is also carried out for adultery.

In spite of this chilling record, last June Saudi Arabia was elected as Chair of a key Panel on the UN Human Rights Committee. It seems unlikely they might be called to account by their new creation any time soon.

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