

# Detained women's rights defender, Loujain AlHathloul, put on trial by Saudi Arabia on Human Rights Day

*Women's rights defender Loujain AlHathloul is on trial in a specialist terrorist court. Human rights organizations call for her immediate, unconditional release*

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, December 11, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December, marking the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN 72 years ago.



This year, the [Free Saudi Activists Coalition](#) is renewing calls for the release of Loujain AlHathloul and other detained Saudi human rights defenders, who have been tortured in detention over the last two and a half years.

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Saudi Arabia's people should be free to advocate for women's rights and equality, without the threat of intimidation, arrest and torture.”

*Suad Abu Dayyeh, Equality Now*

Loujain faced another trial hearing on 10 December, with less than 24 hours notice, and the first since her case was transferred to the Specialised Criminal Court on 25 November 2020.

In a [tweet](#) posted yesterday morning, Lina AlHathloul, Loujain's sister, wrote, “It's #HumanRightsDay today, and the bravest Human Rights defender I know, @LoujainHathloul, is being tried before a terrorism court in

Saudi Arabia at this very moment.”

According to a 2019 report by the American Bar Association, the Saudi Specialised Criminal Court has been used to target human rights activists and ‘routinely convicts individuals of terrorism charges without any meaningful evidence’.

On 15 May 2018, the Saudi government began a campaign of arrests of Saudi Women's Human Rights Defenders. Whilst five of the women human rights defenders detained in 2018 have been provisionally released, Loujain AlHathloul, Nouf Abdelaziz, Samar Badawi, Nassima Al-Sadah, Mohammed Al-Bajadi, and Miyaa Al-Zahrani remain in detention.

During their detention, there have been [multiple reports](#) that the women human rights defenders have been tortured, including being electrocuted, waterboarded and sexually assaulted.

According to a website set up by Loujain's family, Saud al-Qahtani, a top royal adviser, was present several times when Loujain was tortured. Loujain told her family that sometimes Mr. Qahtani laughed at her, sometimes he threatened to rape and kill her and throw her body into the sewage system.

To date Loujain or her family have not received any evidence, nor have the Saudi authorities released any evidence in reference to the absurd charges which include calling for the end of the oppressive male guardianship system, contacting international organizations, speaking about her detention, supporting Saudi human rights movements, and applying for a job with the United Nations.

Saudi Arabia must be held accountable for these human rights violations. Suad Abu Dayyeh, Gender Advisor at international women's rights organisation Equality Now, said, "In accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted 72 years ago this week, Saudi Arabia's people should be free to advocate for women's rights and equality, without the threat of intimidation, arrest and torture. Saudi authorities must immediately and unconditionally release all women's rights defenders who have been imprisoned."

On Human Rights Day, the Free Saudi Activists Coalition urges governments around the world, including the incoming Biden/Harris Administration, to speak out against Saudi Arabia's continued disregard for human rights and call for the immediate and unconditional release of Loujain AlHathloul and all Saudi Activists and Women's Human Rights Defenders.

“ Loujain stands for any citizen who speaks out with love for their country and wants the best for their country.

LINA ALHATHLOUL,  
SISTER OF DETAINED SAUDI ACTIVIST  
LOUJAIN ALHATHLOUL



Comment by Lina AlHathloul, Loujain's sister



Free Saudi Activists

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Americans for Democracy & Human Rights Bahrain (ADHRB)  
CIVICUS  
Equality Now  
Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)  
International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)  
Women's March Global

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