

Rights Group Set Up by Khashoggi Launched Posthumously

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – A rights group founded by dissident Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi months before his brutal murder two years ago, was officially launched in the U.S.

Known as Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN), the organization is the brainchild of the Washington Post journalist, a critic of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman.

The Washington Post contributor, Khashoggi, 59, was killed and dismembered at the kingdom’s consulate in Istanbul on October 2, 2018, in a case that tarnished the already bleak reputation of the crown prince, also known as MbS.

Following Khashoggi’s death, the organization remained mostly dormant, but is now expected to become an active voice in the promotion of open government and democracy in the Middle East.

DAWN, which will be based in the U.S. capital, aims to highlight human rights violations of America’s closest allies in Middle East and offer a platform to political exiles from the region to freely

air their views; a vision for which many believe Khashoggi paid with his life after he was brutally killed in the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul nearly two years ago.

“In the summer of 2018, Jamal founded DAWN along with some of his friends, based on his belief that only democracy and freedom will bring lasting peace and security to the Middle East and North Africa,” Sarah Leah Whitson, DAWN CEO, said at a virtual news conference.

“We are going to uphold Jamal’s legacy,” added Whitson, who was the former director of the Middle East and North Africa division of Human Rights Watch.

To mark the second anniversary of the Khashoggi’s death, two high-profile documentaries about his killing, “Kingdom of Silence” and “The Dissident”, are to be presented on Friday. The first is a political thriller examining the complex relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, and how the murder of Khashoggi amplified entanglements between the two countries.

The second, directed by acad-



U.S. intelligence agencies believe Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman ordered the operation to kill Jamal Khashoggi

emy award-winning director of Icarus, Bryan Fogel, is “the untold story of the murder that shook the world.”

A group of Saudi dissidents has also announced the formation of an exile opposition group, the National Assembly Party. Some of its members were associates of Khashoggi.

The Washington Post reported in November that year that the CIA had concluded that bin Salman personally ordered his killing.

Agnes Callamard, the United

Nations special rapporteur for extrajudicial summary or arbitrary executions, has said there was credible evidence that the crown prince and other ranking Saudi officials were individually liable. She has called for an independent and impartial international inquiry into the foul play.

Earlier this month, a Saudi court sentenced eight defendants to seven to 20 years in jail over the murder of Khashoggi, a ruling rejected by a United Nations expert as a “parody of justice”.

Joining New York, Los Angeles, Paris Mayors London Mayor Refuses to Take Part in Saudi Summit

LONDON (Middle East Eye) – London mayor Sadiq Khan has reversed his decision to participate in a Saudi hosted summit this week, to avoid the implication that it means support for the Saudi regime, Middle East Eye has reported.

MEE revealed that Khan could not participate in the event due to an “existing diary commitment”.

The Urban 20 (U20) mayor’s virtual summit is being hosted between 30 September and 2 October by Saudi Arabia as part of its chairmanship of this year’s G20, and will discuss the challenges faced by major global cities.

The mayors of New York, Los

Angeles and Paris had already withdrawn from the event, citing concerns about Riyadh’s human rights record.

On Wednesday, a spokesperson for the London mayor told MEE: “It has never been the mayor’s intention to attend this U20 summit and his invite has previously been formally declined. No one is representing him at the summit or speaking on behalf of London.

The decision to withdraw the official comes after a coalition of human rights groups wrote to Khan, among other mayors, to boycott U20 over concerns about Saudi Arabia’s record on human rights, foreign policy and climate change.

“Saudi Arabia’s government is an unfit and inappropriate host for the 2020 G20 summit and Urban 20 convening,” the groups said in a joint statement.

“As an absolute monarchy without any form of meaningful democratic representation, the Saudi government has a long record of silencing the very voices that are necessary for a meaningful global conversation regarding the massive challenges we collectively face.”

A petition set up by Freedom Forward, one of the co-signatories, urging Khan to boycott the event has received over 7,000 signatures.

New York mayor Bill de Blasio withdrew from the U20 meeting last Thursday, citing ethical concerns about the host country.

“The global Covid-19 pandemic has shown just how crucial it is for cities across the world to work together while standing up for what’s right. We cannot lead the world without speaking out against injustices,” he said.

“We must stand united for combating climate change, advancing peace and protecting human rights. I urge my colleagues in other global cities to join me in withdrawing from this year’s [Urban 20] summit and demanding progress.”

Home Learning in Blockaded Gaza Hindered by Blackouts, Poverty

GAZA STRIP (Dispatches) – Routine blackouts and shaky internet service have made remote learning in the Gaza Strip, besieged by the Zionist regime for over a decade, a challenge for students during the coronavirus pandemic.

With schools closed across the Palestinian enclave since a lockdown in August, hundreds of thousands of students have been stuck at home and learning has moved online.

In Gaza, where poverty is rampant and infrastructure lacking, siblings are often left to argue over precious screen time during the hours when the power is on.

On average Gazans in the territory get eight hours of electricity a day from its lone generating plant. Most families are dependent on foreign aid and struggle to pay for internet or buy extra computers or phones.

“We have to wait until electricity is back on so we can recharge the phones,” said 10th grader Raseel Hussein. “Work is sent over the internet and we have to download it, and that depends on how weak or strong the signal is.”

Her mother, Yasmine, said that “many families are poor and ... can’t afford smart phones or internet to connect with teachers”.

The territory was placed under a lockdown on Aug 24 after the first cases of coronavirus were reported outside of quarantine facilities for people entering Gaza. Since then there have been 2,800 cases and 20 people died.

Gaza is home to two million Palestinians in cities, towns and refugee camps squeezed within an area of 360 square km (139 square miles), with its borders has been sealed off by the Zionist regime and Egypt.

Palestine, India Sign Deals Worth \$36mn

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Palestinian Authority and India’s representative to Palestine, Sunil Kumar, have signed protocols worth \$36.1 million to build developmental projects in the fields of education, health and media.

Palestinian Minister of Education, Marwan Awartani, and Kumar signed the first agreement to build two schools in Jenin and Tubas at a value of \$2.1 million.

The second deal was signed by the Health Minister Mai Kaileh and Kumar

at a value of \$29 million to build the Indian hospital for orthopedic, pediatric, gynecology and internal medicine in Beit Sahour area in the south of the occupied West Bank.

The third agreement was signed by the General Supervisor of the Official Palestinian Media, Ahmed Assaf, at a value of \$5 million to purchase equipment and machines for the new national printing press.

Prior to the signing ceremony, which was held in the prime minister’s office in oc-

cupied Ramallah, the Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki handed Kumar a deed for a plot of land in Ramallah as a gift from the Palestinian Authority to India to build its temporary embassy until the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with al-Quds as its capital where the embassy headquarters would be located.

In February 2018, the Palestinian Authority and India signed agreements for project assistance worth \$41.35 million.

Lies... (Continued From Page One)

The former vice president alternated between smiling and shaking his head in bemusement and firing off attacks of his own as Trump kept interrupting.

In an exceptionally charged moment, Trump spoke dismissively about Biden’s deceased son, Beau, who died from brain cancer in 2015, rejecting an opportunity to show a modicum of personal grace toward his political opponent. Niden alluded to Beau Biden’s military service as he rebuked the president for having reportedly referred to America’s fallen soldiers as “losers.”

Trump answered with a rhetoric roll of the eyes, and began attacking Biden’s other son: “I don’t know Beau; I know Hunter,” he said, proceeding to ridicule Hunter Biden for his business dealings and struggles with drug addiction.

One of the few phases of the debate that might have been taken by an open-minded viewer as an extended and articulate exchange of views came on the subject of the coronavirus pandemic. Trump voiced impatience with a range of public-health restrictions and Biden criticized the president for being dismissive of measures like mask wearing and social distancing.

“If we just wore masks between now — and social distanced — between now and January, we would probably save up to 100,000 lives,” said Biden, who also alluded to the disclosure in the journalist Bob Woodward’s recent book that the president had intentionally misled the American people last winter about the severity of the virus.

Trump, reiterating his demands that the country return to normal, called on Democratic governors to “open these states up” quickly.

But even on a matter as grave as the pandemic, Trump indulged freely in personal mockery. When Biden called him “totally irresponsible” for holding mass rallies without health protections in place, Trump responded by mocking Biden’s more constrained events, suggesting the former vice president would hold large events, too, “if you could get the crowds.” The president, at another point, falsely claimed Biden had finished at the bottom of his college class. “There’s nothing smart about you,” Trump said to his opponent.

Biden at times mocked Trump, recalling at one point the president’s suggestion that people inject disinfectant into their bodies to combat the virus, a gaffe that for a time ended Trump’s daily briefings. “That was said sarcastically,” Trump claimed, though his remarks appeared to be in earnest at the time.

For all his evident frustration with Trump for not abiding by the rules, Wallace made no attempt to correct the president as he unspooled a series of falsehoods. Trump, for example, insisted that Biden had once called criminals “superpredators.” But it was Hillary Clinton who said it, in 1996. And he did not correct Trump when he said Conway did not describe riots as helpful to Trump’s campaign.

In addition to lobbying false allegations, Trump also was unable, or unwilling, to discuss policy issues in a detailed manner. Pressed on whether he believed in climate change, the president said, “I think to an extent yes,” before quickly adding: “We’re planting a billion trees.”

Iranian... (Continued From Page 2)

terror group in a case pursuing the removal of the notorious anti-Iran cult from the State Department’s list of designated foreign terrorist organizations.

The Washington Post reported on Wednesday that Judge Amy Coney Barrett disclosed her legal work for the MKO in the Senate questionnaire she submitted during her 2017 confirmation process to join the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit.

In her questionnaire, Barrett wrote that she was one of five lawyers on a team that worked for the terror group and its U.S. representative office from 2000 to 2001 in their petition to review the State Department’s foreign-terrorist-organization designation.

She also explained that she had “assisted with legal research and briefing” for the MKO’s case while she worked for Miller, Cassidy, Larroca & Lewin LLP, a law firm in Washington that merged with Baker Botts LLP in 2001 during her employment there.

The MKO has conducted numerous assassinations and bombings against Iranian statesmen and civilians since the 1979 victory of Iran’s Islamic Revolution. Its members fled Iran in 1986 for Iraq, where they enjoyed backing from former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

The anti-Iran cult was on the U.S. government’s list of terrorist organizations until 2012. Major European countries, including France, have also removed it from their blacklists.

A few years ago, MKO elements were relocated from their Camp Ashraf in Iraq’s Diyala Province to Camp Hurriyet (Camp Liberty), a former US military base in Baghdad, and later sent to Albania.

MKO terrorists enjoy freedom of activity in the U.S. and Europe, and even hold meetings with European and American officials, among them Trump’s lawyer Rudy Giuliani and former U.S. national security advisor John Bolton.