



Durbin calls for expulsion of Saudi Ambassador

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CHICAGO – U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) today called for the expulsion of the Saudi Ambassador to the United States, Prince Khalid bin Salman, son of King Salman of Saudi Arabia and the younger brother of the Crown Prince, until the completion of a credible third party investigation into the disappearance and murder of noted journalist and critic of the Saudi government, Jamal Khashoggi. On Friday, Saudi Arabia confirmed for the first time that Jamal Khashoggi died in the kingdom's consulate in Turkey, absurdly claiming his death occurred following a "fist fight" gone bad.

“The only person on Earth outside of the Saudi kingdom who appears to accept the Saudi ‘investigation’ is President Donald Trump. We ought to formally expel the Saudi Ambassador to the United States until there is a completion of a third party investigation into the kidnap and murder of Jamal Khashoggi. And we should call on our allies to do the same. Unless the Saudi kingdom understands that civilized countries around the world are going to reject this conduct and make sure that they pay a price for it, they are going to continue to do it,” Durbin said in an interview on NBC’s Meet the Press. “If we want them to stop this and make clear that we don’t accept it, we need to be decisive – expel the Ambassador, stop our assistance to their war in Yemen, let them know they are going to pay a price.”

In his interview, Durbin also mentioned the cases of Saudi political prisoners Raif Badawi and Waleed al-Khair. Raif Badawi, the former editor of news and commentary website Free Saudi Liberals, was arrested in 2012 and later sentenced to 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a large fine. Waleed al-Khair is a Saudi lawyer who is serving a 15-year prison sentence for his human rights activism.

Last week, Durbin had a phone conversation with Ambassador Khalid bin Salman about Khashoggi’s disappearance. Following that call, Durbin [stated](#) that he could not support President Trump’s arms sale with Saudi Arabia, called on Secretary Mnuchin to

immediately cancel his upcoming trip to Saudi Arabia, and pressed the Trump Administration to finally nominate a U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia after a two year delay.

Last week, Durbin also joined 10 of his Senate Democratic colleagues in [letters](#) to President Donald Trump and to the Trump Organization seeking a full accounting of any financial ties between the Trump Organization and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.