

Dear Lewis Hamilton,

Congratulations on another successful Formula 1 season. Not only have you won race after race, you've also led Formula 1 in issues of diversity and justice. We commend your dedication to raising awareness about issues that are important to you and we hope you will continue your advocacy into the 2021 F1 season. As organizations concerned deeply with the human rights abuses carried out by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, we ask that you reconsider your participation in the upcoming race being hosted in Saudi Arabia in 2021. If this is not possible due to prior commitments, we ask that you make a statement at this race.

After receiving a letter from the son of a Bahraini torture victim, you had expressed you wanted to reach out to the leaders of Bahrain but were unable to when you contracted the coronavirus. We appreciate your dedication to human rights, and we think that the 2021 Formula 1 season presents an opportunity to stand in solidarity with human rights defenders from Saudi Arabia. For the first time in Formula 1's history, Saudi Arabia will be hosting a race in 2021. We think that this race is a key place to make a statement regarding human rights. You stated in a previous interview that you did not know enough about the Saudi government's human rights record, so to help provide context we have outlined the key issues surrounding the egregious human rights abuses of the Saudi Kingdom.

Detention of Women's Rights Activists: Saudi leaders have imprisoned women's rights activists for calling for the same reforms the kingdom and MBS so publicly tout as advancements in support of women's rights. For example, Saudi women's rights activist Loujain AlHathloul was imprisoned in Saudi Arabia from May 2018 until February 2021 in retribution for her campaigning (successfully) for women to secure the right to drive in the Kingdom. Following her arrest, Loujain endured waterboarding, electroshock, beatings, sexual assault, and more. In 2019, she was offered release in exchange for making a video claiming that she had not been tortured. She refused and remained in prison. Her case was moved to a terrorism court after nearly three years in pre-trial detention and Loujain was sentenced on 28 December 2020 to 5 years and 8 months in prison. Her release in early 2021 was conditional, as she is still on probation and a 5-year travel ban where she will be unable to leave Saudi Arabia. The United Nations and over 40 states at the UN Human Rights Council called for her release, as well as the release of other detained Saudi women's rights defenders, many of whom are still in prison.

The war on Yemen: The leaders of Saudi Arabia are also waging a brutal war on Yemen that is starving almost twenty million people in the worst humanitarian crisis on the planet. In 2015, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia

started bombing Yemen. Saudi Arabia then imposed a land, air, and sea blockade on the country, leaving Yemen to starve. A report released by Save the Children in 2018 estimated that about 85,000 children died of starvation in Yemen. Because of the blockade and war, Yemen is dealing with one of the highest COVID death rates in the world. A recent UN report indicates that there are 13.5 million people facing high levels of food insecurity which will increase to 16.2 in the first half of 2021. The UN calls Yemen the “world’s worst humanitarian crisis.”

The brutal murder of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi: In October 2018, agents ordered by the Saudi government brutally murdered *Washington Post* journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Khashoggi was dismembered with a bone saw while he was still alive in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. The murder of this dissident journalist sparked mass criticism of the Saudi government. Saudi leaders tried to cover up this murder and ultimately failed. An investigation by UN expert Agnes Callamard concluded that the murder was a “premeditated extrajudicial killing” that was “overseen, planned and endorsed by high-level state officials of Saudi Arabia.”

Mr. Hamilton, we believe there are many ways for you to make a statement at this race. Using your platform could be as simple as tweeting Loujain AlHathloul’s story and calling on the Saudi government to #FreeLoujain unconditionally by lifting her travel ban, letting her family travel, and dropping her charges. On top of that, Loujain’s family is calling for the people who tortured Loujain to be held accountable. Given that Loujain was punished for driving, you could put a sticker of Loujain on your car during the race. Another suggestion is for you to wear a shirt on the day of the race calling on the Saudi government to #FreeLoujain and stop their war on Yemen. The organizers of this letter would be happy to provide you with any materials needed or meet with you to discuss action ideas and our concerns further.

We hope you choose to continue your brave advocacy in Formula 1 and speak out on the human rights issues taking place in the countries where you race. Your voice could be critical in this movement to free women’s human rights defenders in Saudi Arabia and end the suffering of millions of people in Yemen. If you would like to speak with our coalition please contact danaka@codepink.org.

Sincerely,

#FreeLoujain Campaign
Action Corps
Alliance for Global Justice
ALQST for Human Rights
Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain

Avaaz
Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America/Bautistas por la Paz
CAPA DePaul
Center for Democracy and Human Rights in Saudi Arabia
Chicago Area Peace Action
Chicago Committee Against War and Racism
CIVICUS: Global Alliance for Citizen Participation
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)
Equality Now
Fellowship of Reconciliation
Feminist Majority Foundation
Freedom Forward
Grassroots Global Justice Alliance
Green Party Peace Action
Indiana Center for Middle East Peace
International Service for Human Rights
Just Foreign Policy
London Students for Yemen
Martin Ennals Foundation
MENA Rights Group
Muslim Peace Fellowship
On Earth Peace
Peace Action
PEACEWORKERS
Project Blueprint
Rethinking Foreign Policy
RootsAction.org
Stop the War UK
Tunisian United Network
United for Peace and Justice
University Network for Human Rights
Veterans For Peace
WESPAC Foundation, Inc.
West Suburban Peace Coalition
Western New York Peace Center
Women's March Global
World BEYOND War
Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation
Yemeni Alliance Committee