

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/saudi-arabia-leaders-urged-to-intercede-on-26-03-2015,47736.html>

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Middle East/North Africa - Saudi Arabia

International campaign

## Leaders urged to intercede on behalf of Saudi blogger

26 March 2015

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Reporters Without Borders calls on the international community to maintain pressure on the Saudi authorities, who alone have the power to overturn the inhumane sentence passed on Saudi blogger Raif Badawi.

Badawi could easily be flogged again tomorrow (Friday), while his wife has reported that he is to be retried by Saudi Arabia's supreme court.

A retrial could be positive or disastrous for Badawi, who was sentenced last November to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes, triggering protests throughout the world. The retrial could result in his sentence being reduced, but it could also result in a death sentence on a charge of apostasy.

Reporters Without Borders has been campaigning tirelessly for months for diplomatic action in support of Badawi.

In a joint initiative, the international secretariat of Reporters Without Borders, its national sections and its foreign bureaux have written to heads of state and government urging them to intercede with the Saudi authorities on behalf of Badawi.

The international secretariat has written to US President Barack Obama and his French counterpart, François Hollande. The Swiss section has written to Swiss Confederation President Simonetta Sommaruga. The German section, Reporter Ohne Grenzen, has written to Chancellor Angela Merkel. The Spanish section has written to Spanish Premier Mariano Rajoy and former King Juan Carlos.

Reporter Ohne Grenzen also requested the support of Deputy Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel on 4 March, before an official visit to Riyadh where he met with King Salman. Speaking ahead of the meeting, Gabriel said the severity of the sentence was "unfathomable" for the German government and was "straining bilateral ties."

The international section launched a petition for Badawi's release that was handed in to the Saudi embassy in Paris on 15 January. So far it has more than 45,000 signatures.

Reporters Without Borders has organized a series of pro-Badawi demonstrations outside the Saudi embassy in Paris since January. Reporter Ohne Grenzen and Amnesty International staged a demonstration outside the Saudi embassy in Berlin on 22 January.

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You can download those documents on our website :

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