



Foreign, Commonwealth
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Dear Amy Brickhill,

Thank you for your email of 24 August to the former Foreign Secretary attaching a letter from Professor Neve Gordon about the conviction of Leeds University PhD student. The Correspondence and Parliamentary Questions Unit in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has been asked to reply.

No aspect of our relationship with Saudi Arabia prevents the UK government from speaking frankly about human rights. We regularly raise concerns with Saudi authorities through diplomatic channels, including Ministers, our Ambassador, and the British Embassy in Riyadh. The former Prime Minister raised human rights concerns during his visit to the Kingdom on 16 March.

We are monitoring Salma Al-Shehab's case closely. The British Embassy in Riyadh raised concerns about Salma Al-Shehab's case with the Saudi Human Rights Commission on Monday 22 August. Lord Ahmad, Minister for the Middle East discussed this case on 25 August with the Saudi Ambassador. The British Ambassador to Riyadh raised individual cases of concern including Salma Al-Shehab's case with the Saudi Vice Foreign Minister on 6 September. Our Ministers, Ambassadors and Embassy in Riyadh have repeatedly raised concerns at senior levels with the Saudi authorities in relation to women's rights defenders.

Yours sincerely,

**Correspondence and Parliamentary Questions Unit
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**