

**WE SUPPORT  
SAUDI ARABIAN  
WOMEN'S DRIVE  
TO FREEDOM**

**ندعم قيادة  
النساء  
السعوديات  
نحو الحرية**

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



A Saudi Arabian woman taking the wheel in support of the “women2drive” initiative in Saudi Arabia. The image is made of thousands of pictures of Amnesty International members and supporters who have expressed solidarity with women in Saudi Arabia asking the authorities to grant them the right to drive.  
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His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud  
The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques  
Office of His Majesty The King  
Royal Court  
Riyadh  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

15 June 2012

Your Majesty,

I am writing to convey to you the expression of solidarity that thousands of Amnesty International members and supporters have shown with women in Saudi Arabia campaigning for the authorities to grant them the right to drive as a first step towards lifting other forms of discrimination. I urge you take steps towards fulfilling their legitimate demands.

Since International Women's Day on 8 March 2012, more than 20,000 Amnesty International members and supporters have written letters to the Saudi Arabian authorities and signed petitions in solidarity with women activists in the country. The image on the card accompanying this letter is made up of some of the thousands of pictures taken by Amnesty International members expressing their support for women's right to drive.

Amnesty International welcomed your decision last year to allow women to vote and run in municipal elections starting from 2015 and to be appointed to the Shura Council. However, we remain concerned that women in Saudi Arabia continue to face severe discrimination in law and in practice. They are subject not only to the driving ban, which affects their freedom of movement and limits their ability to carry out simple daily activities, but also a legal framework which means they are unable to travel, engage in paid work, pursue higher education or marry without the permission of a male guardian.

As you will know, women in Saudi Arabia last year launched an internet campaign calling on those of them who hold international driving licences to drive in protest at the ban from 17 June 2011 onward; scores of women responded to the call. According to our information, several were arrested and forced to sign pledges not to drive again and one woman was tried and sentenced to 10 lashes for driving a car, although the verdict was later overturned.

We are calling on you to heed the demands of women in Saudi Arabia by lifting the ban on driving, with a view to taking measures to remove other forms of discrimination against women in law and practice. In the meantime, we would urge you to instruct law enforcement officials not to arrest women for driving and ensure that all judicial procedures brought against women for driving are dropped.

Yours sincerely,



Salil Shetty  
Secretary General



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