November 4, 2026

To: Mark Zuckerberg, Chief Executive Officer, Meta Platforms, Inc.

Subject: Demand for Restoration of Saudi Human Rights and Civil Society Accounts Restricted at the Request of Saudi Authorities

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg,

We write on behalf of the American Committee for Middle East Rights (ACMER), Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN), ALQST for Human Rights, MENA Rights Group, and the European Saudi Organization for Human Rights (ESOHR) concerning Meta's decisions to restrict access inside Saudi Arabia to Facebook and Instagram accounts belonging to human rights defenders, journalists, researchers, exiled dissidents, and civil society organizations at the request of the Saudi government. Among those affected are U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents living in the United States, including one of the undersigned organizations' senior staff.

Since April 30, 2026, Meta has restricted the ability of users inside Saudi Arabia to access accounts belonging to organizations and individuals documenting human rights abuses and advocating political reform. Reported affected accounts include those of ALQST for Human Rights, Democratic Diwan, ACMER Senior Policy Advisor for Gulf Issues Abdullah Alaoudh, and human rights defender Yahya Assiri.

Meta's own Transparency Center records Saudi government requests to restrict hundreds of accounts and pages during 2026. The company's reporting identifies the content at issue as including political speech and material posted by media, activist, and civil society organizations. Meta has acknowledged that some of the content did not violate its own Community Standards but was restricted in response to local legal requirements.

These actions raise fundamental questions about Meta's independent human rights responsibilities. Compliance with a government's domestic law does not, by itself, establish that a restriction is necessary or proportionate under international human rights standards. Nor does it justify restricting the entire account of a human rights organization when a government has not identified specific unlawful content.

The Saudi government relies on broadly worded provisions of its Anti-Cyber Crime Law, including Article 6, to criminalize expression said to threaten public order, religious values, public morals, or privacy. Saudi authorities have used such provisions to prosecute

peaceful critics, journalists, and human rights defenders, including in cases involving social media posts.

Meta's Corporate Human Rights Policy expressly recognizes government censorship demands as a threat to human rights defenders. The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights likewise require businesses to assess and address adverse human rights impacts associated with their operations and business relationships.

You are also the "American tech platform" to which the U.S. government has addressed its own policy. On May 28, 2025, Secretary of State Rubio declared it "unacceptable for foreign officials to demand that American tech platforms adopt global content moderation policies or engage in censorship activity that reaches beyond their authority and into the United States." We are separately asking the State and Treasury Departments to apply the same measures to the Saudi officials responsible, and the House Judiciary Committee to add these orders to its inquiry into foreign censorship demands on your companies.

We are particularly concerned that Meta's reported restrictions have deprived people inside Saudi Arabia of access to independent human rights reporting and political debate, while affecting individuals who are exercising their rights from the United States and other countries.

We ask Meta to answer the following questions:

1. Provide the full text of every Saudi government request or legal order received in 2026 concerning Facebook or Instagram accounts belonging to human rights defenders, journalists, activists, or civil society organizations.
2. Identify the Saudi agencies that submitted, transmitted, or enforced these requests.
3. Explain the legal and human rights assessments Meta conducted before implementing the restrictions, including the standards applied and the conclusions reached concerning legality, necessity, and proportionality.
4. Identify the specific content allegedly violating Saudi law for each affected account and explain why Meta restricted entire accounts or pages rather than individual items of content.
5. Explain how Meta reconciled these restrictions with its Corporate Human Rights Policy and its stated commitment to protecting human rights defenders against government censorship demands.
6. State whether Meta considered the fact that some affected users are U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents posting from the United States.

7. Explain whether Meta sought clarification, narrowing, or modification of the requests, or considered challenging them before Saudi courts.
8. Identify the role of Meta's regional offices, employees, contractors, or business partners in receiving, assessing, or implementing the requests.
9. Explain what notification and appeal mechanisms were made available to affected users and provide aggregate data on appeals and their outcomes.
10. Disclose whether Meta has received comparable requests from the United Arab Emirates or other governments in the region concerning peaceful political speech or human rights advocacy.

We ask Meta to take the following actions:

1. Restore access in Saudi Arabia to every affected account that does not violate Meta's own rules.
2. Publish the Saudi requests and orders, together with the human rights assessments Meta conducted, to the fullest extent legally possible.
3. Notify each affected user of the specific content and legal provision at issue and provide an effective appeal process with meaningful human review.
4. Publish clear criteria governing compliance with government requests that target peaceful political speech, journalism, or human rights advocacy.
5. Commit to challenging overbroad or disproportionate censorship demands through all reasonably available legal avenues before complying.
6. Disclose government requests for country-specific restrictions in Meta's transparency reporting, broken down by requesting agency, legal basis, content category, and outcome.
7. Meet with the undersigned organizations and affected users within 30 days.

Meta has publicly recognized the danger that government censorship demands pose to human rights defenders. We ask you to apply that commitment in practice and ensure that Meta's services do not become instruments for suppressing peaceful political expression.

We request a written response within 30 days. We intend to make this letter and Meta's response public.

Sincerely,

The American Committee for Middle East Rights (ACMER)
Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)
ALQST for Human Rights

MENA Rights Group
The European Saudi Organization for Human Rights (ESOHR)