November 4, 2026

To: Elon Musk, Owner of X; and the Executive Leadership and Legal Team of X Corp.

Subject: Demand for Reversal of X's Saudi Arabia Geo-Blocking of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, and Dissidents

Dear Mr. Musk and X Leadership,

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 X's decision to restrict access inside Saudi Arabia to the accounts of human rights defenders, journalists, exiled dissidents, and civil society organizations following requests from Saudi authorities.

This decision is particularly troubling because X initially appeared to resist the Saudi government's demand.

In May 2026, affected users were informed that X had received a request from Saudi authorities but had not taken action. X reportedly told users that it strongly believed in defending and respecting their voices. This position distinguished X from other platforms that had already restricted accounts belonging to Saudi activists and civil society organizations.

That position changed on July 13, 2026, when X began withholding accounts inside Saudi Arabia to comply with what it described as its obligations under Saudi Arabia's local laws. ALQST for Human Rights subsequently reported that at least 100 accounts had been made unavailable inside the Kingdom. Reported affected users include human rights defender Yahya Assiri, U.S. lawful permanent resident and policy adviser Abdullah Alaoudh, Saudi-British activist Ghanem al-Masarir, academic Madawi al-Rasheed, and other activists, journalists, and civil society organizations.

The Saudi order accompanying some notifications reportedly alleged that the affected accounts transmitted material infringing on public order, religious values, public morals, or the sanctity of private life. These broad allegations did not identify specific posts that supposedly violated the law.

The restrictions are especially troubling because they target entire accounts rather than particular items of content. The effect is to prevent people inside Saudi Arabia from

accessing the full body of an individual's reporting, commentary, and human rights advocacy, including material unrelated to any particular allegation.

The consequences extend beyond Saudi Arabia. Some affected account holders live and publish in the United States, including U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents. Their peaceful political speech is being prevented from reaching audiences inside Saudi Arabia at the direction of a foreign government.

X's public commitment to defending users' voices identifies transparency, user notification, and challenges to legally defective or overly broad government orders as important safeguards. Its public policy also recognizes the importance of defending users against government restrictions that threaten free expression.

The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights require businesses to respect internationally recognized human rights, assess adverse impacts, and provide or cooperate in remedying harms they cause or contribute to. Compliance with local law does not eliminate these responsibilities.

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 ask X to answer the following questions:

1. Provide the full text of every Saudi government request, order, and accompanying legal instrument received in 2026 concerning the accounts of activists, journalists, human rights defenders, and civil society organizations.
2. Explain precisely why X initially declined to act on the Saudi request in May and what changed before the company began geo-blocking accounts on July 13.
3. Identify the individuals or teams responsible for approving the reversal, including the roles of X's legal, public policy, and Trust and Safety teams.
4. Identify every account restricted pursuant to the Saudi requests, the date each restriction began, and the legal provision invoked.

5. Explain why X restricted entire accounts rather than identifying and withholding specific posts alleged to violate Saudi law.
6. Identify the specific content alleged to violate Saudi law for each affected account and explain whether X independently assessed the content against its own rules.
7. Explain what human rights due diligence X conducted, including its assessment of legality, necessity, proportionality, and the implications for users posting from the United States.
8. State whether X sought to narrow or modify the Saudi request, challenged any part of it, or considered litigation in Saudi Arabia or another relevant jurisdiction.
9. Explain how the decision is consistent with X's published commitments to transparency, user notification, and challenging legally defective or overly broad government orders.
10. State what appeal mechanism is available to affected users and disclose the number and outcomes of appeals received.
11. Explain whether commercial relationships with Saudi state-linked entities or the risk of legal consequences for X's local employees or partners influenced the decision.
12. State whether X has received comparable requests from the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Israel, or other regional governments in 2026 concerning peaceful political speech or human rights advocacy.

We ask X to take the following actions:

1. Immediately restore access inside Saudi Arabia to every affected account that does not violate X's own rules.
2. Publish the Saudi requests and orders, together with X's legal and human rights assessments, 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 mechanism with meaningful human review.
4. Explain publicly why X abandoned its initial position that it would not act on the Saudi request.
5. Adopt a clear policy establishing that X will contest overbroad or disproportionate government demands targeting peaceful political speech and human rights advocacy through all reasonably available legal avenues.
6. Report government requests for country-specific restrictions in a transparent, disaggregated manner, identifying the requesting agency, legal basis, content category, number of accounts affected, and outcome.
7. Meet with the undersigned organizations and affected users within 30 days.

X's initial response demonstrated that resistance to the Saudi government's demand was possible. Its subsequent reversal raises the question of why that resistance was abandoned and whether the decision adequately accounted for the human rights consequences.

We ask X to reverse its decision and restore the ability of people inside Saudi Arabia to access peaceful political speech, independent journalism, and human rights advocacy.

We request a written response within 7 days. We intend to make this letter and X'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)