



[The Late Journalist Khashoggi's Fiancée and a Human Rights Group He Founded Sue the Saudi Crown Prince](#)

Hatice Cengiz, the fiancée of the late journalist Jamal Khashoggi, and Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN), a human rights group that he founded, have sued Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and more than 20 regime officials over the brutal October 2018 murder of the U.S.-based democracy advocate. The lawsuit was filed in a Washington D.C. court and seeks damages against bin Salman and his other co-conspirators, stating that their crime was the result of weeks of planning and premeditation. Khashoggi was murdered in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) concluded with confidence that the Saudi Crown Prince ordered the killing. Shortly before his death in 2018, Khashoggi founded DAWN in order to push for democratic and human rights reform in Saudi Arabia and across the Middle East. The lawsuit contends that bin Salman viewed Khashoggi's actions as an existential threat and thus lured him into the consulate for the purpose of carrying out the crime.

The suit filed by Cengiz and DAWN indicates that the founding of the organization played a crucial role in bin Salman's determination to murder Jamal Khashoggi. The organization's goal to promote human rights and democratic reform in the Middle East would have been seen as a major threat to the regime's status in the region. The lawsuit alleges that the Saudi government was alerted to the existence of DAWN after hacking the cell phones of some of Khashoggi's associates. Saudi Arabia has admitted that its agents were behind the murder, but it has rejected conclusions from foreign intelligence agencies that bin Salman himself ordered the assassination. However, the CIA and other intelligence organizations came to the conclusion that bin Salman personally ordered the operation after an extensive investigation. The lawsuit is seeking to prove that bin Salman personally orchestrated the plot by seeking discovery from American law enforcement, intelligence, and administration officials during the trial.

The case against the Saudi Crown Prince and his co-conspirators is being filed in the United States because part of the plot was executed on American soil. When Khashoggi went to the Saudi Embassy in Washington D.C. to secure documentation to marry Cengiz, he was told that they could not provide it, and he would have to retrieve it from the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul. According to the lawsuit, this was an intentional misdirection to lure Khashoggi to Turkey where the assassination plot could be carried out. This is also an indication that Khashoggi's murder was a predetermined operation, and not a botched mission as the Saudi leadership claims.

Lastly, the lawsuit argues that the Torture Victims Protection Act gives the plaintiffs standing in the court. This law provides victims of state-sponsored torture abroad with the ability to sue the perpetrators if they set foot in the United States. The lawsuit also expresses that adequate justice is unable to be served in Saudi Arabia or Turkey. Saudi Arabia carried out a trial of several people it said were involved in the plot, but it was widely condemned as an illegitimate trial. Therefore, the suit is seeking financial damages to be determined at trial, in addition to a clear declaration that bin Salman ordered the murder of Jamal Khashoggi.