

Beat: Politics

## SAUDI ARABIA TAKES THE LEAD OF A STRATEGIC BODY OF THE COUNCIL OF HUMAN RIGHTS

### ASSOCIATIONS HAVE RETALIATED FIRMLY

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**USPA NEWS** - Faisal Trad, Saudi Arabia's ambassador in Geneva, has been elected Chair of the UN Human Rights Council panel appointing independent experts. Right: Michael Møller, Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva. The publication of his appointment immediately caused anger among human rights defenders

"U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power and EU foreign minister Federica Mogherini should condemn and work to reverse the appointment of Saudi Arabia as head of a key UN Human Rights Council panel that selects top officials who shape international human rights standards and report on violations worldwide, said UN Watch, a non-governmental watchdog organisation based in Geneva, on September 20th, "UN Watch, said.

"It is scandalous that the UN chose a country that has beheaded more people this year than ISIS to be head of a key human rights panel," said UN Watch executive director Hillel Neuer. "Saudi Arabia has arguably the worst record in the world when it comes to religious freedom and women's rights, and continues to imprison the innocent blogger Raif Badawi," Neuer added. "This UN appointment is like making a pyromaniac into the town fire chief, and underscores the credibility deficit of a human rights council that already counts Russia, Cuba, China, Qatar and Venezuela among its elected members." Continues the NGO. "UN Watch", which considers, in a statement, that it is "outrageous that the UN choose a country that has more people than decapitated the Islamic State" for this key post. Faisal Trad takes effect the head of a group of five diplomats whose role is to choose the particular experts to observe and report violations of human rights in the world. However, Saudi Arabia has executed at least 80 people since the beginning of 2015, and "probably has the worst record on religious freedom and women's rights," UN Watch continues and consider that "Minorities (ethnic, religious, sexual) and political opponents are also treated harshly and regularly condemned." Source Amnesty International

### AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONDEMNS THE APPOINTMENT OF MR TRAD "A DISCREDITING TO DIPLOMACY OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL"- -----

In its latest report, Amnesty International further states that "the authorities have targeted the community of human rights defenders, small but active and have used anti-terrorism laws to suppress its peaceful activities to denounce and fight human rights violations ". SCSTA activist Haidar believes that the Council of the UN Human Rights thus gives "green light" to Saudi Arabia "to start whipping" Raif Badawi, her husband, opposition to the regime and Saudi blogger sentenced 1000 to receive lashes. As explained Geopolis, Saudi Arabia has long campaigned to replace the German Joachim Rucker at this position. In May, a Western diplomat confided to La Tribune de Genève: "If it succeeds, it will be a disaster for the Council of Human Rights This could send us back to the worst times of the former commission had sunk into disrepute. " Source: UN, UN Watch, Amnesty International.

#### Article online:

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