

# SAUDI ARABIA: A call for help to Human Rights Without Frontiers

*Human Rights Without Frontiers* urges anyone who can help to contact Joanna Colomas

HRWF (04.09.2018) – My name is Joanna Colomas and I am a 23-year-old French national requesting any form of assistance in my inquiries about my missing fiancé, Basim Ahmed Bahmeed, born 09.05.1991, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

We met in 2014 when we were students in Los Angeles and have been in a relationship since then. However, his family has always opposed our relationship and has continuously tried to keep us apart. They have unfortunately managed to prevent us from getting married to date, as it is complicated for a Saudi to marry a non-Saudi. We have also been trying to conceive and are presently following an IVF treatment, with the embryo transfer planned for next month. I understand that despite these circumstances, our not being married prevents me from being able to inquire about him through consular channels. For what it is worth, I am in possession of a sworn statement that solemnly declares we are in a stable relationship and live together in France, and I have a photocopy of his passport that I can provide upon request.

Up to 2016, his parents and siblings made death threats against him/us, and took his phone and passport away for several months so he would not be able to travel out of Saudi Arabia. As of 2017, seeing that we still intended to make a life together, Basim's parents resorted to more extreme

actions, i.e, contracting a long-term bank loan in his name so he could not leave the country, or bribing officials so his criminal records showed that he owed hundreds of thousands of American dollars to the Saudi government for unpaid fines, which resulted in his arrest at the airport in Jeddah, KSA, when he attempted to travel to Nice, France on 07.03.2018. Some of the alleged infractions in his record dated back to 2008. Nevertheless, he had been able to travel out of Saudi Arabia by proving the fines were added recently using false dates.

He traveled for work from Nice to Dubai on 08.28.2018. He sent me confirmation of his arrival at Dubai airport by text at 02:20 am via WhatsApp, and he said he was heading to customs. I have not heard from him ever since and he has disappeared from social media and all other modes of communication. His phone is not turned off but the line seems completely shut down. His number appears unregistered on WhatsApp. His phone number is/was +966555773041.

I have contacted all hospitals in Dubai and the surrounding area but have failed to localize him. I have called the Dubai police to report him as missing but was told that I had to come in person. I would travel to look for him without hesitation if only I did not fear being arrested too. Indeed, I have strong reasons to think that his family, knowing my name and passport number, may have added similar charges to my record in Dubai by means of bribery. I have also addressed an email to the Dubai police on Thursday 08.30.2018 and they told me that I "must contact Dubai Police via Diplomatic Channels, i.e. my Consulate or Embassy in UAE along with his passport copy"; however, the French Consulate and Embassy both have replied that they were unable to assist as he is not a French citizen. Due to past events and his family being aware of his

imminent work transfer to Dubai, I believe that his parents may have once more succeeded in obtaining new charges added to his records, resulting in his arrest at customs.

I am extremely worried about him, his health and safety and really do not know what else to do to find him and help him. I would be so grateful for your assistance in this affair.

Sincerely,

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