

## **AN OPEN LETTER IN SOLIDARITY WITH LOUJAIN al-HATHLOUL, A SAUDI WOMAN JAILED FOR DRIVING**

The Saudi women's rights activist Loujain al-Hathloul has been in jail since May 2018. She has been refused basic rights, such as visits from her family, and has felt that the only course of action that is open to her is to go on hunger strike.

It is an outrage that Loujain was jailed in the first place, never mind being held in prison for over two and a half years. Her 'offence', namely being a woman driving a car just weeks before Saudi Arabia lifted a decades-old ban on female drivers is obviously no offence at all. In addition, it is clear from her family that Loujain has faced sexual harassment and torture, including electric shocks and water boarding, in detention.

In short, the case of Loujain al-Hathloul casts a spotlight on the utterly appalling Saudi human rights record and the dreadful nature of the whole Saudi regime.

We stand in solidarity with Loujain, as well as the countless other women who have faced the same kinds of treatment, merely for asserting their human rights.

We call on the Irish Government to summon the Saudi Ambassador to account for these awful actions and ask the Saudi government to explain why Loujain cannot have regular visits and demand that visits are permitted immediately.

SIGNED:

Bríd Smith TD

Mary Lou McDonald TD

Denise Mitchell TD

Louise O'Reilly TD

Kathleen Funchion TD

Pauline Tully TD

Violet-Anne Wynne TD

Mairead Farrell TD

Reada Cronin TD

Patricia Ryan TD

Sorca Clarke TD

Imelda Munster TD

Rose Conway-Walsh TD

Claire Kerrane TD

Senator Lynn Boylan

Senator Elisha McCallion

Senator Ivana Bacik

Senator Rebecca Moynihan

Senator Marie Sherlock

Senator Annie Hoey

Roisin Shortall TD

Catherine Murphy TD

Holly Cairns TD

Jennifer Whitmore TD

Joan Collins TD

Catherine Connolly TD

Marian Harkin TD

Senator Frances Black

Senator Eileen Flynn

Senator Lynn Ruane

Senator Alice Mary Higgins