

The businessman and economics writer Essam al-Zamel was arrested for expressing his support for human rights and liberties, the Arab Spring and calls for reform in Saudi Arabia; and for criticising Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman's abortive plan to sell off the state oil company, Saudi Aramco, pointing out the risks involved.

A hearing into his case was held in the Specialised Criminal Court, the Saudi court that handles terrorism cases, where the Public Prosecution brought the following charges against him:

1. Seeking to undermine the social fabric of the nation.
2. Seeking to stir up sedition in the Kingdom through his Twitter account.
3. Attacking and discrediting policies and decisions of the State.
4. Questioning the probity of the State.
5. Describing the State as tyrannical.
6. Attacking the rulers' foreign policy.
7. Inciting demonstrations and sit-ins.
8. Belonging to a proscribed group (the Muslim Brotherhood).
9. Insulting the States of Egypt and the UAE and their leaders, and meddling in their affairs.
10. Communicating with a Qatari figure after the Doha boycott.
11. Meeting foreign diplomats in official positions several times; offering them analyses and opinions; and supplying them with information about the Kingdom, initiatives and decisions it is working on, and what is happening inside it, without informing the authorities or asking their permission before meeting the foreigners, with the intention of harming Saudi Arabia's policies, as he was aware the diplomats would relay those opinions to their countries.
12. Participating with other Saudis in a Telegram group that denigrated policies and decisions of the State and its rulers.
13. Preparing, sending and storing on his Twitter account tweets prejudicial to public order and harmful to Saudi policy, and belonging to an online group on Telegram.