Dear Mohammed Ben Sulayem,

Cc: Formula 1, Teams: McLaren, Mercedes, Ferrari, Alpine Racing, Aston Martin, Red Bull, Williams, Alpha Tauri

16 March 2022

We are writing to raise our concerns over upcoming Formula 1 (F1) races in Gulf countries, with the season opening in Bahrain, followed by a race in Saudi Arabia. Both states, as well as the United Arab Emirates (UAE), are participants in the Saudi-led military coalition waging an ongoing war in Yemen.

The coalition has committed war crimes during their campaign in Yemen over the past seven years and contributed to what the United Nations has termed “the world’s worst humanitarian crisis”. This year alone, in a single airstrike the Saudi-led coalition killed at least 100 people. The three Gulf countries’ participation in the catastrophic war has been met with silence on the part of the Fédération Internationale de l’Automobile (FIA) and F1, whilst Bahrain has been rewarded with both what is believed to be the “longest race contract deal ever signed” and Gulf Air Grand Prix opening race of the season, and Saudi Arabia benefitted from being added to the F1 calendar despite its appalling rights record.

We note that you met with Mohammed bin Zayed, the de facto leader of the UAE, where he congratulated you on your election as FIA President, wishing you “success in representing the UAE in the best possible manner, reflecting its bright image worldwide”, whilst you also received a medal of honour from King Hamad bin Isa AlKhalifa of Bahrain in 2004. These affiliations should not prevent you from taking a public stance against the ongoing conflict in Yemen and we rather hope that your relationships with Gulf statesmen can help to influence positive change.

We applaud your position on Ukraine and we are encouraged by your explicit public condemnation of the Russian invasion and your expression of “sadness and shock” for victims in Ukraine. Whilst we fully support the proactive steps taken by the FIA on this front, we are concerned that you have yet to take similar measures when it comes to Gulf nations, and we ask that you apply the same moral standards in condemning violations and supporting victims in all countries where F1 races take place.

Victims include individuals such as Dr Abduljalil AlSingace, who has been unlawfully imprisoned for over a decade in Bahrain simply for calling for democracy, as have Hassan Mushaima and Sheikh Ali Salman. Naji Fateel, Ali AlHajee, Sayed Nizar Alwadaei and six children also remain arbitrarily detained in Bahrain, whilst torture victims Mohammed Ramadhan and Husain Moosa are at risk of imminent execution along with 24 others. In Saudi Arabia, 81 individuals were executed this weekend. People like Salma Al-Awda and Hassan Farhan Al-Maliki continue to face the death penalty, and earlier this month another child defendant, who was 14-years-old at the time of their alleged crime, was again sentenced to death by the regime. In the UAE, leading human rights activist Ahmed Mansoor remains wrongfully behind bars.

We are concerned that the FIA and F1 are actively facilitating sportswashing in Gulf countries and their continued failure to raise abuses committed by these regimes creates a stark double standard. We thus urge the FIA to apply the same standards of commitment to human rights across all countries and use your platform to publicly raise the aforementioned concerns and individual cases, publicly sympathise with these victims and establish a clear human rights policy.
Yours sincerely,

Members of the UK Parliament
1. Brendan O’Hara MP, Scottish National Party
2. Ian Blackford MP, Westminster Leader, Scottish National Party
3. Sir Ed Davey MP, Leader of the Liberal Democrats
5. Andy McDonald MP, Labour
6. Andy Slaughter MP, Labour
7. Clive Betts MP, Labour
8. Clive Lewis MP, Labour
9. Hilary Benn MP, Labour
10. Kim Johnson MP, Labour
11. Paula Barker MP, Labour
12. Richard Burgon MP, Labour
13. Zarah Sultana MP, Labour
14. Alistair Carmichael MP, Liberal Democrat
15. Christine Jardine MP, Liberal Democrat
16. Daisy Cooper MP, Liberal Democrat
17. Jamie Stone MP, Liberal Democrat
18. Layla Moran MP, Liberal Democrat
19. Sarah Olney MP, Liberal Democrat
20. Tim Farron MP, Liberal Democrat
21. Wendy Chamberlain MP, Liberal Democrat
22. Alan Brown MP, Scottish National Party
23. Alison Thewliss MP, Scottish National Party
24. Alyn Smith MP, Scottish National Party
25. Chris Law MP, Scottish National Party
26. David Linden MP, Scottish National Party
27. Joanna Cherry QC MP, Scottish National Party
28. Patricia Gibson MP, Scottish National Party
29. Dr Philippa Whitford MP, Scottish National Party
30. Richard Thomson MP, Scottish National Party
31. Ben Lake MP, Plaid Cymru
32. Hywel Williams MP, Plaid Cymru
33. Chris Hazzard, MP Sinn Féin
34. Francie Molloy, MP Sinn Féin
35. John Finucane, MP Sinn Féin
36. Michelle Gildernew, MP Sinn Féin
37. Mickey Brady, MP, Sinn Féin
38. Órfhlaith Begley MP, Sinn Féin
39. Paul Maskey, MP Sinn Féin
40. Kenny MacAskill MP, Alba Party
41. Claudia Webbe MP  
42. Jeremy Corbyn MP  
43. Jonathan Edwards MP  

_House of Lords_  
44. Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle, Green Party  
45. Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb, Green Party  
46. Lord Purvis of Tweed, Liberal Democrat  
47. Baroness Smith of Newnham, Liberal Democrat  
48. Lord Scriven, Liberal Democrat  
49. Baroness Stern, Crossbench  

_Members of the European Parliament_  
50. Alviina Alametsä MEP, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance  
51. Ernest Urtasun MEP, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance  
52. Dietmar Köster MEP, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats  

_Members of the Spanish Parliament_  
53. Senator Adelina Escandell i Grases, Esquerra Republicana  
54. Senator Ana Maria Surra Spadea, Esquerra Republicana  
55. Senator Elisenda Pérez i Esteve, Esquerra Republicana  
56. Senator Jordi Martí Deulofeu, Esquerra Republicana  
57. Senator Josep Maria Reniu i Vilamala, Esquerra Republicana  
58. Senator Josep Rufà i Gràcia, Esquerra Republicana  
59. Senator Miquel Caminal i Cerdà, Esquerra Republicana  
60. Senator Mirella Cortès i Gês, Esquerra Republicana  
61. Senator Robert Masih i Nahar, Esquerra Republicana  
62. Senator Vanessa Callau Miñarro, Esquerra Republicana  
63. Senator Xavier Castellana i Gamisans, Esquerra Republicana  
64. Carolina Telechea Lozano, Esquerra Republicana  
65. Gabriel Rufián Romero, Esquerra Republicana  
66. Gerard Álvarez García, Esquerra Republicana  
67. Inès Granollers Cunillera, Esquerra Republicana  
68. Joan Capdevila Esteve, Esquerra Republicana  
69. Joan Margall i Sastre, Esquerra Republicana  
70. Jordi Salvador i Duch, Esquerra Republicana  
71. Maria Carvalho Dantas, Esquerra Republicana  
72. Marta Rosique i Saltor, Esquerra Republicana  
73. Montse Bassa i Coll, Esquerra Republicana  
74. Norma Pujol Farre, Esquerra Republicana  
75. Pilar Vallugera i Balañà, Esquerra Republicana  
76. Xavier Eritja Ciuró, Esquerra Republicana  
77. Aina Vidal Sáez, En Comú Podem
Members of the Irish Parliament
78. Senator Joe O’Reilly, Fine Gael
79. Brendan Howlith TD, Labor
80. Cathal Crowe TD, Fianna Fáil
81. Ivana Bacík TD, Labor
82. Jim O’Callaghan TD, Fianna Fáil

Members of the Belgian Parliament
83. Senator Orry Van de Wauwer, New Flemish Alliance
84. Nahima Lanjri, Christian Democratic and Flemish Party

Members of the Italian Parliament
85. Jessica Costanzo, Five Star Movement
86. Nicola Morra, Five Star Movement

Members of the German Parliament
87. Andrej Hunko, MdB, Die Linke
88. Rainer Keller, MdB, Social Democratic Party

Members of the French Parliament
89. Dominique Potier, Socialist Party
90. Régis Juanico, Génération.s Party