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REDRESS CALLS FOR JUSTICE FOR THE BRITISH NATIONALS TORTURED IN SAUDI ARABIA

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Today, British nationals, Bill Sampson, Les Walker and Sandy Mitchell confirm their ordeal of torture during their two year struggle to establish their innocence and release from incarceration in Saudi Arabia. Having endured days of brutal beatings, and cruel threats, confessions were extracted from each of the men and used as the only evidence to convict them of bombing their fellow nationals.

The Executive Director of REDRESS, the international human rights organisation which has been assisting the victims commented:

"Torture and the use of forced confessions in trials is a fundamental violation of an individual's rights under the Convention against Torture to which Saudi Arabia is a party. Torture is a heinous crime under international law and all governments have a legal and moral duty to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice."

REDRESS calls on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to comply fully with its international obligations including the rights of these men to reparation: In particular REDRESS insists that the Saudi Government must:

- Formally acknowledge that the convictions, based solely on confessions extracted under torture are unsafe and that therefore the men are not guilty of the bombings;
- Immediately carry out an independent and impartial investigation into all allegations of torture, and prosecute those responsible for these crimes;
- Fully compensate the men for the torture they endured and their resulting losses; and
- Carry out the necessary legislative and structural reforms to ensure that all detainees are protected from torture in the future.

REDRESS urges the British government to use its power under international law to protect the rights of its own nationals by:

- Ensuring that Bill Sampson, Les Walker and Sandy Mitchell receive compensation and confirmation of their innocence from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and
- Insisting that the Saudi Government try the alleged perpetrators or let them stand trial in Britain for the appalling crimes they inflicted on British nationals.

Dr D'Souza adds that: "unless the UK Government is prepared to confront crimes of torture with firmness and conviction, this would be tantamount to condoning such crimes".

For further information, please contact:

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