



PRESS RELEASE

BRING FATIMA HOME

09 10 2018

This Statement is issued by KRW LAW LLP on behalf of Victoria O'Leary-Al Darwish

Victoria O'Leary-Al Darwish demands the support of the Irish Government on behalf of her vulnerable young daughter Fatima who has been trapped in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) for the past 11 years, to bring her home and reunite her with to her mother and family here in Ireland.

This reunion to would bring closure to this untenable nightmare of a situation and put an end to the physical, mental and emotional abuse her father is subjecting her to.

KRW LAW LLP is instructed by Victoria O'Leary-Al Darwish in her demand for the return of her daughter currently trapped in a reputed danger zone in the Eastern Province of Dammam Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). Victoria is an Irish born national - as is her daughter Fatima, now aged just 13.

Victoria has never waned in her fight over the past 11 years to get her daughter home to safety in Ireland

Victoria married a Saudi National who gained Irish post-nuptial citizenship in 2008. Fatima, their daughter, was born in 2005 and by the time she was two years old her father solely planned to relocate back to KSA under false pretences where he then took Fatima out of Ireland with him in 2007. To date she has been kept there away from Victoria and her family in Ireland. Fatima's father has an Irish passport which make him free to travel globally without restriction.

Victoria request that the Minister of Justice revokes Fatima's father Irish citizenship.

Fatima's father married again in KSA using Irish attained bank loans to set up home with his new wife of whom two more children he fathered - that marriage failed but those children are with their mother (under Saudi law) post-that divorce. He has now married again for the third time.

Fatima's father divorced Victoria under Saudi law, however she was unaware of this for several years and the status of that divorce is now in doubt - under Irish law they are still married.

Fatima's father until now has faced arrest, questioning and deportation from one of his many visits to Poland, he has been questioned by the Saudi police about Victoria's case against him for her daughter.

There have been numerous attempts to contact the Saudi authorities online over the years but all to no avail. Victoria has previously been issued with family visit visas from the Saudi Ambassador at the KSA Embassy in Dublin - however since 2013 she has been denied visa requests to visit her daughter.

Victoria has now been told that the Saudi authorities have no information on her visa requests at all and that she is no longer entitled to a visa because she is divorced under Saudi Law.

Under the late Saudi King Abdullah's ruling, Victoria is entitled to an Iqama which is a Saudi residency card enabling and facilitating her to independently to see her daughter.

HRH Prince Mohamed Bin Salman was made aware of Victoria's petition for her daughter in early 2018. Victoria again not only appealing to HRH King Salman but to his son the Crown Prince for clemency regarding Fatima's situation – including the fact that Fatima's Irish passport is held by her father.

Irish officials from both the DFA and DOJ have been aware of this case but refused to assist. They are now being asked once again to facilitate Victoria's request in the return of her daughter Fatima back to Ireland. Victoria met officials from DFA earlier this year but she is still waiting an update on her daughter's welfare check through Interpol.

On a visit to Bahrain in 2015 to see her daughter it was clear that Fatima's mental health is being affected by the maternal separation she has suffered over the years when she tried to slit her wrists directly in front of her mother when after been told yet again by her father that she could not return with her mother to Ireland.

Whilst in 2017 on another visit to Bahrain to see Fatima, Victoria's time with her was cut drastically short when her father abducted her without warning from outside the hotel apartment where she was staying.

Fatima has made calls to the Saudi help-line numbers to plead for help to get her out of the house as she lives in fear of the next beating. Fatima has been warned by her father that if she mentions her mother's name she will be killed. The untold stress of this inhumane situation is leaving Victoria with the impression that time is running out for her daughter.

Earlier in July this year Fatima took temporary possession of her Irish passport whilst her father holidayed in Italy with his new wife, she managed to flee the house - although a call was made to the Irish embassy in Riyadh via the Emergency Duty Officers but word came back from the DFA in Dublin to say she could not access safe immunity at the Irish Embassy.

This September Victoria received recent photos of Fatima's bruised body - she contacted the Irish Embassy in Riyadh again but word came back to say assistance could not be provided.

KSA although recognising The Hague Convention is not a signatory to it yet - however Fatima is an Irish born citizen with rights to family life in Ireland in accordance with the Irish State obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.

KRW LAW LLP will be assisting Victoria in pressing the Irish government to secure the release of Fatima and bringing her home to Ireland to be reunited with her mother. **ENDS**

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