

Canada, Saudi Arabia resume full diplomatic ties after 5 years

Five years after Saudi Arabia expelled Canada's ambassador from Riyadh over Ottawa's remarks on women's rights activists, both countries agreed Wednesday to restore full diplomatic relations, Global Affairs Canada (Canada's foreign ministry - GAC) announced in a statement.

According to press reports, the meeting in November between Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit was instrumental to this decision. "In light of what has been discussed between [Trudeau and bin Salman] ... and the desire for both sides to restore diplomatic relations between the two countries on the basis of mutual respect and common interests, it has been decided to restore the level of diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia to its previous level," the statement from GAC read.

In 2018, Saudi Arabia expelled Canada's ambassador after GAC tweeted support for women's rights activists -including Samar Badawi- who had been arrested. The Saudis also sold Canadian investments and ordered their citizens studying in Canada to leave. The activists have since been released.

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