



Saudi prince reminds Biden of US torture in Iraq

Description

USA/SAUDI ARABIA: Bin Salman reportedly fired back at US leader over Washington's own human rights poor record

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman allegedly called out Washington's long track of "mistakes" made in Iraq and Afghanistan as President Joe Biden confronted him over the gruesome murder of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi.

That's according to Reuters, quoting a statement made by a senior Saudi official to Reuters on Saturday.

While Saudi Arabia admitted its "*mistakes*" made in the Khashoggi affair, it has "*taken all measures to prevent similar mistakes in the future,*" the crown prince, commonly referred-to by the acronym MBS, was quoted as having told Biden.

MBS also apparently tried to downplay the significance of the murder of the journalist, who was slain and subsequently dismembered at the Saudi consulate in Turkey in 2018, pointing a finger at the US' own questionable record of human rights abuses. He also brought up the recent killing of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, slain during an Israeli raid in the West bank.

"In the same year, similar regrettable incidents took place and other journalists were killed in other parts around the world," the crown prince said. *"The United States also made a number of mistakes like the incident of Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq and others."*

All countries around the world, including the US and Saudi Arabia, share values that they agree on and have others that they disagree on, the crown prince suggested. Imposing said values on others, however, is not exactly a good idea, he went on, pointing to Washington's failures in the Middle East.

"However, trying to impose those values by force could have the opposite effect, as happened in Iraq and Afghanistan, where the US was unsuccessful," he said.

The 2018 murder in Turkey, which the CIA claimed was ordered by Mohammed bin Salman himself, left a major dent in the US-Saudi relations. Holding the kingdom as a whole and MBS personally accountable for the incident was among the primary talking points for Biden during his presidential campaign, when he had promised to make the country a “*pariah*” on the international stage.

Speaking to reporters after his meeting with MBS, Biden insisted he does not regret targeting the crown prince, and raised the issue “*at the top of the meeting*” making his stance “*crystal clear.*”

“I said very straightforwardly: For an American president to be silent on an issue of human rights, is this consistent with – inconsistent with who we are and who I am? I’ll always stand up for our values,” Biden stated.

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