

## **HATICE CENGIZ: END OF NEWCASTLE TAKEOVER BID IS A CLEAR DEFEAT FOR MOHAMED BIN SALMAN, VICTORY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

(LONDON - 30 JULY 2020) Hatice Cengiz, the wife of slain Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi, today welcomed the cancellation of a deal to purchase Newcastle United Football Club by Mohamed Bin Salman, calling it a clear defeat for the Crown Prince and a major victory for human rights.

Background: On 28 April, Ms. Cengiz lawyers sent a letter to the Premier League asking them to reject the takeover of Newcastle United by Mohamed Bin Salman, because of his involvement in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. On 1 May, Premier League CEO Richard Masters replied offering condolences and saying he could not comment publicly on the matter. On 20 May, wrote to Masters requesting a meeting before a decision is made. In a 28 May letter to Cengiz' attorney, Masters acknowledged the Premier League is sympathetic and "fully considering" Cengiz call to block the takeover deal.

In response to news that the Mohamed Bin Salman's chaired and backed consortium was forced to pull out of the deal, Hatice Cengiz said:

"This is a victory for human rights and decency and clear defeat for Mohamed Bin Salman and his efforts to sports-wash his human rights record. I'm grateful to The Premier League for putting principles and values ahead of profit. I'm thankful to the Newcastle United Fans, Members of Parliament and NGOs who spoke out against this deal. Let this defeat send a strong message to the leadership in Saudi Arabia that they will not be able to use their money to cover up their human rights record or protect those responsible for Jamal's murder. We will not stop and we will not rest until we get Justice for Jamal."

Ms Cengiz added "I hope Newcastle United fans find a better and more suitable owner and best wishes to the team in future season."

Ms Cengiz's lawyer Rodney Dixon QC added "the Mohamed Bin Salman Saudi Public Investment Fund backed consortium is trying to damage control by covering up a major embarrassment. They were forced to pull out because the Premier League rules would not allow the takeover. The PL Owners' and Directors' test has shown its worth and the right and proper outcome has been reached. The rule of law has prevailed and that is absolutely vital for justice for Jamal and for us all".

Justice for Jamal is an international campaign seeking justice and accountability for the murder of Washington Post Journalist Jamal Khashoggi inside the Consulate of Saudi Arabia in Istanbul on 02 October 2018.

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