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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bennett Requests DOJ Probe of Saudi/SAPRAC Activities and FARA Filing

(August 18, 2017 – Washington, D.C.) Barry Bennett, partner in Avenue Strategies Global, LLC, a leading Washington D.C. consulting and lobbying firm and also a registered agent of the Embassy of Qatar,¹ today released a letter he sent to Dana J. Boente, Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security at the Department of Justice detailing potential and serious violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938 by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Saudi American Public Relation Affairs Committee (SAPRAC). Mr. Bennett's firm represents the State of Qatar in public affairs matters.

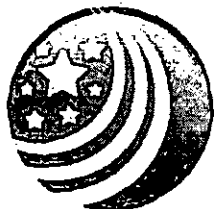
In his letter, Bennett notes the absence of a legal FARA registration by SAPRAC. The registration requirement was established to ensure that the U.S. Government and the people of the United States are informed of information and propaganda distributed by foreign actors to influence US policy.

"Transparency is paramount against today's backdrop of terrorists and self-serving foreign actors trying to sway and taint US foreign policy," said Bennett. "Given the history of foreign funded terrorism against the U.S., it is imperative that Saudi Arabia adhere to the letter of the Foreign Agent Registration Act." Bennett continued, "Distributing propaganda cloaked in slick advertising campaigns with no discernible sponsors but for a vague, tax exempt but foreign-owned organization directly flies in the face of American security and American laws. The practices of SAPRAC, their propagandists and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia must be called into question and brought into compliance with all federal statutes."

A full text copy of the Bennett-to-Boente letter is attached.

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¹ Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.



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August 18, 2017

The Honorable Dana J. Boente
Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security
Department of Justice
c/o Foreign Agent Registration Act (FARA) Unit
600 E Street, NW
BICN - Room 1300
Washington, DC 20004

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Re: The Saudi American Public Relation Affairs Committee, Inc. (SAPRAC)
The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
The Foreign Agents Registration Act

Dear Mr. Assistant Attorney General Boente:

I write to bring to your attention a potential violation of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, 22 U.S.C. § 611 *et seq.* (FARA), and to request an investigation into the facts for a determination of whether a violation has occurred.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) website explains:

The purpose of FARA is to insure that the U.S. Government and the people of the United States are informed of the source of information (propaganda) and the identity of persons attempting to influence U.S. public opinion, policy, and law.

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The Act requires every agent of a foreign principal, not otherwise exempt, to register with the Department of Justice and file forms outlining its agreements with, income from, and expenditures on behalf of the foreign principal. These forms are public records and must be supplemented every six months.

The Act also requires that informational materials be labeled with a conspicuous statement that the information is disseminated by the agents on behalf of the foreign principal. The agent must provide copies of such materials to the Attorney General.

One must register within ten days of agreeing to become an agent and before performing any activities for the foreign principal.

SAPRAC is a domestic, tax-exempt entity. Its website describes itself as:

an organization that aims to further strengthen the historic relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States, both politically and economically. It firmly believes that the best way to achieve this goal is through people to people communication. Most importantly, it will do so by adhering to its core values of transparency, integrity and excellence.

SAPRAC's website additionally states that:

[I]n addition to being an intercultural committee, SAPRAC serves as a platform that is keen on delivering informative material to its audience. Key topics on Saudi Arabia and U.S.-Saudi relations are to be communicated in the form of academic papers, videos, motion graphics, and short documentaries, providing solid and up-to-date academic and informative material about Saudi Arabia.

Consistent with those stated goals, SAPRAC recently produced and aired television commercials containing content criticizing the State of Qatar. The information contained in the advertisements identically tracks the current diplomatic stance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

However, to date, SAPRAC has made no FARA filing in regard to these television advertisements.

According to a Lobbyist Disclosure filed on March 28, 2016, pursuant to the Lobbyist Disclosure Act, as amended, 2 U.S.C. § 1601 et. seq., SAPRAC is 100% owned by a foreign citizen, Salman Abdulrahman Alansari, Riyadh, KSA, who also serves as the group's lobbyist.

While SAPRAC is a domestic entity, owned and operated by a foreign individual, all of SAPRAC's activities clearly and directly benefit a foreign principal. Its messaging is identical to that of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

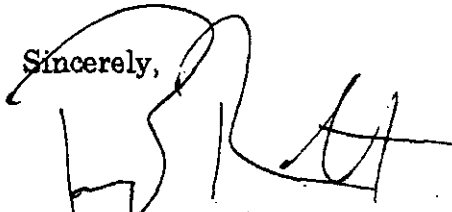
It is difficult if not impossible to meaningfully distinguish SAPRAC from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in this instance. In fact, if the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were to establish a foreign agent for the purpose of producing and disseminating propaganda on behalf of itself, it would look *exactly* like SAPRAC.

I hereby request that you initiate an investigation into the recent dissemination of "informative materials" by SAPRAC to include determinations of fact on the following questions:

- What is the true nature of the relationship between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and SAPRAC?
- By producing and disseminating propaganda on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is SAPRAC subject to FARA's disclosure requirements?
- If so, what federal laws might have been violated?

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Bennett', written over a white background.

Barry Bennett, Partner
Avenue Strategies Global, LLC