

Canada seeks Saudi death sentence clemency

by UPI

OTTAWA -- The Canadian government is petitioning Saudi Arabia for clemency in a death sentence given a Palestinian-Canadian for homicide, ministers said. Mohamed Kohail, 23, was sentenced in Saudi Arabia this week for a death that resulted from a large schoolyard brawl, the Globe and Mail newspaper reported from Ottawa. Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier told Parliament Tuesday that diplomatic contacts had been made on his behalf. "In the end, we hope the verdict will be changed," she said. However, opposition Liberals said the minority Conservative government was going against its own policy announced last fall by Canadian Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day, who said "we will not actively pursue bringing back to Canada murderers who have been tried in a democratic country." He was referring to a Canadian man facing the death penalty in Montana for a double homicide in 1983, the report said. After the debate, Bernier wouldn't explain to reporters why the government was treating Saudi Arabia differently, the report said. Canada also has a policy of refusing to repatriate foreign prisoners who could face the death penalty.

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