

FairSquare

Mr Amin Hassan Nasser
President and CEO, Saudi Aramco
P.O. Box 5000, Dhahran 31311
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Dear Mr. Nasser

FairSquare Projects is a not-for-profit company registered in London that works with a range of partners to help prevent human rights abuses. Its team has worked on human rights in Saudi Arabia and the GCC region for over a decade, with a focus on migrant workers' rights.

We plan to publish materials regarding practices on Saudi Aramco (Aramco) sites, and in that light want to offer Aramco to respond to our concerns. Our findings, which focus on the working conditions of migrant workers working in support of Aramco's operations, employed by companies working in Aramco's supply chain, are principally based on interviews with 27 individuals including former and current workers, and colleagues and relatives of deceased workers, where were carried out in 2024/2025. The workers, Nepali nationals, were employed by 21 different sub-contractors, with some working for multiple companies, across four regions in Saudi Arabia. We have also reviewed Aramco materials on its website and independent reporting of the conditions of workers in Aramco's supply chain. Our key concerns are summarised below.

Concern 1: Workers at Aramco sites said they were routinely exposed to extreme temperatures for prolonged periods

Workers at Aramco sites described being exposed to extreme temperatures, including in some cases over 50 degrees. Multiple workers recounted witnessing colleagues faint and collapse, apparently as a result of the heat. One worker described taking a colleague to his supervisor after he collapsed shortly after his arrival in Saudi Arabia - "We thought he would die".. Exposure to excessive heat has wide-ranging physiological impacts, often exacerbating existing health conditions and resulting in premature death and disability. One worker who was based at Aramco sites for over a decade said he routinely worked in over 40 degree heat, and now suffers from a series of long-term health problems linked to heat exposure. We understand that Aramco's lead contractors may in some cases be required to produce heat stress prevention plans for the projects they manage, with measures including three hour work stoppages in the middle of the day during the hottest months, something that is already required by law in Saudi Arabia. Rudimentary summer working hours bans of this kind have been heavily criticised by scientific experts, as well as by FairSquare and the Vital Signs Partnership, for failing to offer adequate protection in extreme heat.

Concern 2: Fuel tank drivers were required to work dangerously excessively long hours

Several men employed as fuel tank drivers, transporting Aramco products, said they worked excessively long hours, without proper breaks, and that this created real risks of road traffic accidents with catastrophic potential. One driver said that he had fallen asleep at the wheel and driven off the road, and said that, "due to sleeplessness, many traffic accidents have occurred. People have been killed." Another driver said they regularly drove for up to 19 hours at a time and that his employers expected their drivers to sleep in their vehicles. We note that Aramco has acknowledged the problem of road traffic accidents, including fatalities,



in its workforce. It is unclear to FairSquare what steps the company has taken in practice to reduce the risk of these incidents, in particular to ensure that drivers are provided with adequate rest opportunities and that appropriate limits are placed on their working hours.

Concern 3: Accommodation provided to some workers in the Aramco supply chain may have reached the threshold of “slum housing”

Multiple workers interviewed as part of our investigation described unsanitary and cramped living conditions which may meet the UN Habitat threshold for “slum housing”. One worker told researchers, “We live in a container accommodation. We get electric shocks when it rains.” Workers described being provided poor food, with one comparing it to “what animals eat”. Others said their employers punished them if they cooked their own food. The standards of accommodations described by workers would appear to be in violation of both Aramco’s code of conduct and Saudi Arabia’s labour regulations.

Concern 4: Workers suffering death or serious injury are routinely denied compensation.

We examined six cases where workers died or sustained disabilities in the course of their work. In only one case did the men or their families receive adequate compensation. In the other five cases, those affected were left in debt and unable to meet basic expenses. The process to claim compensation from Saudi Arabia’s General Organisation for Social Insurance following injury or death is exceptionally complex and challenging, particularly from outside the country, and without support from employers it is close to impossible for most migrant workers’ families to succeed. Some families whose relatives had died described being persuaded, even pressured, by their employer or by Nepali officials to release their relatives’ body into proceeding without a post-mortem, which companies later said were required to pay out compensation. In two cases where workers’ death was categorised as a “natural death”, families and colleagues of the deceased men were told that no compensation would be payable because their deaths were not work-related, despite both deaths occurring on Aramco premises during work hours. “Natural death” is a descriptor commonly used by Saudi Arabian authorities in the deaths of migrant workers, which provides no meaningful information about the cause of death, and which denies the families of the deceased information about their loved ones’ death, and the opportunity to claim compensation .

Concern 5: Aramco failing to adequately monitor its supply chain and ensure respect for human rights

Aramco states that, “the safety and well-being of our employees, their dependents, and our company’s contractors is paramount to our strategy and operations”. The company’s Code of Business Conduct (2022), which applies to all Aramco employees, contract employees, subsidiaries and controlled affiliates, includes high-level principles on health and safety and non-discrimination. Aramco has a “Supplier Code of Conduct” which sets out requirements for those working with Aramco which all suppliers, vendors, manufacturers, contractors, and sub-contractors must acknowledge and adhere to. However, several workers told researchers that their direct employers were able to avoid or subvert safety regulations and standards set by Aramco. The picture they paint suggests Aramco’s policies and processes to enforce and implement its standards through its supply chain are not adequate. For example, a driver for a major Aramco contractor told researchers that Aramco safety officials inspect the site, but site managers from his employer would be told in advance, and would upgrade their safety standards temporarily: “Safety measures, like provision of harnesses and drinking water, are fully enforced when Aramco people come. But when [Aramco inspectors] are not there, [my managers] don’t care at all.” Another worker interviewed said that if he raised issues with Aramco, his employer would complain to him, since Aramco might not issue the company with work permits. Some workers said that Aramco was doing less monitoring than it had in the past. One man told interviewers he had unsuccessfully attempted to raise concerns about driver safety, after he fell asleep while driving, but there were rarely senior Aramco managers around to speak to.



5 May 2026

International standards on supply chain management

The findings of this investigation, drawn from multiple employers across a wide range of Aramco sites, suggests that the cases above were not isolated cases of bad practices, but reflect systematic issues in the way Aramco manages its supply chain in Saudi Arabia. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) provide the authoritative framework for the human rights responsibilities of companies, requiring businesses to avoid causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts through their own activities as well as those they are directly linked to through their business relationships. They should carry out human rights due diligence: assessing actual and potential human rights impacts, integrating and acting upon the findings, tracking responses, and communicating how impacts are addressed. For an enterprise of the size and scale of Aramco, operating in a sector characterised by large projects, geopolitical and safety risks, outsourced delivery models and complex supply chains, and being headquartered in a country with well-documented and severe limitations on fundamental rights such as workers' freedom of association, its responsibilities under the UNGPs are heightened.

As such, Aramco bears a significant responsibility for the protection of the rights of migrant workers employed through its supply chain by its business partners, who support its operations and profit generation. That means, among other things, that Aramco has to take account of the laws and practices in Saudi Arabia that give rise to widespread abuse of workers, and of the well-documented tendency for contractors and subcontractors through the contracting and supply chains to seek to cut costs and increase margins at the expense of worker protections. The fact that Aramco may have health and safety, human rights or worker welfare standards built into contracts, and carries out some monitoring of these, is evidently not enough to ensure these are being followed consistently by its suppliers.

We would appreciate your engagement on this critical matter. We invite you to provide us with any information on this matter by close of business on 15 May. Any responses or comments you provide will be reflected in future reporting by FairSquare as appropriate. Please note that we may, at our discretion, publish your response, in whole or in part.

We would of course be happy to meet and discuss these concerns with you.

Yours sincerely,



Nicholas McGeehan
Director

