Saudi Airlines suspends Canadian operations starting Aug. 13

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The rift between the federal government and Saudi Arabia has prompted the country's state airline to suspend operations in Canada.

Saudi Airlines issued a tweet early Tuesday saying flights to and from Canada would be suspended starting August 13.

Saudi Arabia operates at least two routes to the country, both of which depart from Toronto.

Transport Canada did not immediately respond to request for comment on the decision.

Saudi Airlines' move comes two days after the national government suspended all new trade agreements with Canada, recalled its own ambassador and gave Canada's chief diplomat 24 hours to leave the country.

Saudi Arabia says its responding to a tweet from Ottawa's Global Affairs ministry calling for the "immediate release" of jailed human rights activists in the country, comments Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland has defended.