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# Top court lets stand Saudi immunity in 9/11 case

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By **James Vicini**  
WASHINGTON | Mon Jun 29, 2009 11:23am EDT

(Reuters) - The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday let stand a ruling that **Saudi Arabia**, four of its princes and other Saudi entities cannot be held liable for the September 11, 2001, hijacked plane attacks in the United States.

The justices refused to review the ruling by a U.S. appeals court in New York that the Saudi defendants were protected by sovereign immunity in the lawsuit brought by victims of the attacks and their families.

The appeals court had upheld a lower court's dismissal of the lawsuit claiming Saudi Arabia, four princes, a Saudi charity and a Saudi banker provided material support to al Qaeda before the September 11 attacks.

The victims and their families argued that because the defendants gave money to Muslim charities that in turn gave money to al Qaeda, they should be held responsible for helping to finance the attacks.

The appeals court ruled that exceptions to the sovereign immunity rule do not apply because Saudi Arabia has not been designated a state sponsor of terrorism by the U.S. State Department.

Attorneys for the victims appealed to the Supreme Court. They said the appeals court's ruling dramatically limited the ability of victims to recover damages for acts of terrorism committed in the United States.

But the Obama administration late last month urged the high court to reject the appeal. It said New York courts correctly concluded that Saudi Arabia and its officials are immune from lawsuit for governmental acts outside the United States.

The Supreme Court turned down the appeal without comment.

(Reporting by James Vicini, Editing by Deborah Charles and [Will Dunham](#))

U.S. SAUDI ARABIA

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