

President Hosni Mubarak  
Office of the President  
Al Etehadia Building, Heliopolis  
Cairo, Egypt

September 17, 2010

Dear President Mubarak:

As Egypt prepares for the upcoming parliamentary elections, we must raise concerns about your government's adherence to its commitments to respect political and civil liberties.

Over the past few months there have been a number of troubling incidents in which members of the human rights and political community in Egypt have been targeted by Egyptian authorities, seemingly for no other reason than their interest in participating in a free and fair electoral process. Most recently, we were disturbed to hear of an incident in which a Freedom House staff member, Sameer Jarrah, was detained upon arrival in Egypt for more than 12 hours in unsanitary conditions before being deported back to his home country of Jordan. Mr. Jarrah was attempting to travel to Egypt in order to prepare for a program funded by the United States Agency for International Development in which a high-level delegation would be meeting with senior government officials in order to facilitate inter-country dialogue on human rights issues.

Mr. Jarrah was told that he has been placed on a banned-travel list and would not be allowed to enter the country for an indeterminate amount of time. The details of this incident are particularly troubling since Mr. Jarrah was held without access to food or water despite notifying authorities that he suffers from a medical condition.

We also have reason to believe that other Freedom House staff members have been placed on the banned travel list based entirely on their work association. This travel ban blocks ongoing, routine collaboration between Freedom House and registered Egyptian civil society organizations.

We request that your government immediately conduct an investigation into this incident. Additionally, we urge you to respect the human rights of Egyptians, consistent with the Egyptian government's international commitments, so that a free and open political process may take place.

Sincerely,

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