



European Bank
for Reconstruction and Development

Ana Gomes
European Parliament

20 January 2017

Dear Ms Gomes,

Thank you for your letter of 7 December. We appreciate that you are sharing your concerns about the conditions regarding human rights and civil society in Egypt with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The EBRD President Sir Suma Chakrabarti asked me to respond on his behalf.

We understand that many in the international community share—several of the concerns outlined in your letter. I would like to emphasise that we monitor political developments in our countries of operation very closely, including the enabling environment for independent civil society, and management frequently reports on these issues to the EBRD Board of Directors. The EBRD Board of course represents the interests and positions of the 65 countries which are the EBRD's shareholders, as well as the European Union and the European Investment Bank. In this process we take our Article 1 mandate very seriously and regularly assess countries' commitment to and application of the principles of multiparty democracy and pluralism.

Egypt became an EBRD recipient country on 30 October 2015, a process that entailed rigorous assessments of the political and economic situations in the country. The assessments were, in part, based on wide consultations with many actors in the country, including civil society organisations operating in and outside of Egypt.

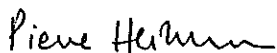
We are currently in the process of drafting the country strategy for Egypt, which will include a review of compliance with Article 1 tracking progress against the 14 criteria which constitute the political aspects of the Bank's mandate. As part of this process, we organised two meetings in Cairo with civil society organisations on 25 October with EBRD management and Board respectively. We are also planning a subsequent consultation with international CSOs in London in January to discuss the draft country strategy. Also, recommendations, letters and reports provided by civil society organisations and other stakeholders in writing will be taken into consideration as an important part of our assessment of the political context as well as transition challenges and the business environment in the country.

EBRD's shareholders maintain the view that the Bank has to remain engaged to the extent possible, also in difficult environments, to promote a market-oriented transition process, which we recognise proceeds at different paces in different countries. In our view, promoting the development of a dynamic private sector is a key tool to foster transition and reform progress in a sustainable manner. Successful projects, combined with sound policy reforms, also help demonstrate to all stakeholders, in and out of Government, how to build effective and inclusive approaches based on best international practice which deliver sustainable jobs and growth. In response to the evolving economic and political reform environment the Bank adapts the pace and direction of its operational engagement.

The Bank will also continue to monitor and raise various concerns in our public political assessments as well as in private dialogue with the authorities in our countries of operations.

I remain at your disposal should you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely



Pierre Heilbronn
Vice-President Policy and Partnerships
EBRD