

Brussels, 21 MARS 2016  
A(2016)884106-1004644

To the signatories of the letter of 19 February 2016

*Dear colleagues,*

Thank you for your letter of 19 February concerning Giulio Regeni, the young Italian doctoral researcher found dead on 3 February in Cairo after disappearing on 25 January. I have personally raised his death twice with the Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry and expressed the EU's great concern about this case. The case was also raised by the EEAS and Commission officials in Cairo during bilateral talks with the Egyptian authorities in February. I particularly insisted on the importance to conduct a thorough, independent and transparent investigation, working in close cooperation with the Italian authorities, in order to shed full light on the circumstances and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

The protection and promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law are guiding principles of the EU's external action and policies. The EU actively promotes and defends these principles in its engagement, with Egypt as well as other European Neighbourhood Policy partners, including in the framework of the Association Agreements. The latest EU-Egypt Sub-Committee on Democracy, Governance and Human Rights took place on 15 and 16 November.

As we are moving forward in our Association Agreement with Egypt, the EU is consistently flagging the need for positive signs from Cairo in the political and human rights spheres. The EU also continues to support civil society organisations and to raise the need to protect the space in which they operate.

Regarding migration and the right of asylum, the EU supports an active, comprehensive and geographically balanced EU external migration policy in accordance with the European Agenda on Migration and the June 2015 European Council conclusions. A broader foreign and security policy approach is essential to strengthen cooperation with countries of origin and transit aiming at addressing root causes of and preventing irregular migration. These include smuggling and trafficking, protecting persons in need of international protection, respecting the right to seek asylum, ensuring effective return and readmission, and maximising the development impact of well managed migration and mobility. This requires working more closely with partners to stabilise fragile countries, tackling conflict, political violence, human rights violations, the dire socio-economic situation and lack of good governance which fuel irregular migration and forced displacement. Such cooperation must be based on dialogue, ownership and shared responsibility.

I will remain fully engaged to protect EU fundamental values.

Yours sincerely,



Federica Mogherini