



Европейски парламент Parlamento Europeo Evropský parlament Europa-Parlamentet Europäisches Parlament
Euroopa Parlament Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο European Parliament Parlement européen Parlaimint na hEorpa
Europski parlament Parlamento europeu Eiropas Parlaments Europos Parlamentas Európai Parlament
Parlament Ewropew Europees Parlement Parlament Europejski Parlamento Europeu Parlamentul European
Európsky parlament Evropski parlament Euroopan parlamentti Europaparlamentet

Ms Federica Mogherini

High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-
President of the European Commission

26 January 2018

We, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, urge you to raise the ongoing judicial harassment of Nubian human rights defenders (HRDs) with the Egyptian authorities. 32 of them will face trial in Egypt in a State Security Court on 30 January 2018 for “inciting protest, disruption of public order, and participating in an unauthorized demonstration.” The death of one of the activists, Gamal Sorour, while in custody due to medical negligence, must be investigated, and those responsible prosecuted.

In addition to the denial of indigenous rights enshrined in Egypt’s 2014 Constitution, this case involves the repression and defamation of peaceful HRDs—not to mention the trampling of Egyptians’ rights to a fair trial and to freedoms of assembly and expression, as guaranteed through Egypt’s international human rights commitments. Article 2 of the EU-Egypt Association Agreement frames bilateral relations within the respect of such rights. The EU and Egypt also just committed to cooperate in implementing these very same constitutionally-guaranteed rights, in their Partnership Priorities ratified in July 2017.

The Nubian people are indigenous to present-day Sudan and Egypt. In the Aswan region, they have been subjected to land expropriation and forced displacement by the Egyptian government, and face cultural marginalisation and racial discrimination across the country.

The rights activists’ next hearing is set for 30 January 2018 before the State Security Court after an appeal to move the trial to a regular court was rejected. State Security Courts do not comply with fair trial standards and their sentences cannot be appealed.

25 of the 32 human rights defenders awaiting trial were arrested at a peaceful march on 3 September 2017, singing traditional songs to mark Eid al-Adha and campaign for the Nubians’ “right of return” as guaranteed by Article 236 of the 2014 Egyptian Constitution. Armed police physically assaulted



Европейски парламент Parlamento Europeo Evropský parlament Europa-Parlamentet Europäisches Parlament
Euroopa Parlament Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο European Parliament Parlement européen Parlaimint na hEorpa
Europski parlament Parlamento europeo Eiropas Parlaments Europos Parlamentas Európai Parlament
Parlament Ewropew Europees Parlement Parlament Europejski Parlamento Europeu Parlamentul European
Európsky parlament Evropski parlament Euroopan parlamentti Europaparlamentet

protesters and made arrests. Then in October, 7 more Nubian defenders were arrested as they peacefully protested outside the Camp for the release of the 25 detainees. In November, 10 more Nubian activists were arrested for protesting the death in detention of HRD Gamal Sorou these 10 will be tried in a separate case.

The trial will include prominent Nubian rights activists such as Ms Seham Osman, a founding member of Genoubia Hora, the first organised feminist group in Aswan, that was set up to combat widespread acceptance of both police violence and violence against women.

Lawyer Mohamed Azmy is the former President of the Aswan-based General Nubian Union, which advocates for Nubian rights, in particular their right to return to their ancestral lands after their forced displacement, as a result of government-led projects such as the construction of the Aswan High Dam, since the 1960s.

Maysara Abdoun has been actively involved in the defence of minority and Nubian rights in the Aswan governorate. He is the training coordinator at Border Center for Support & Consulting (BSC), an organisation led by a group of youths with experience in the field of community development and human rights.

In addition, the following Nubian defenders will also be tried: Mohammad Osman, Wafaa Ali, Hamdy Ali, Moneer Basheer, Mohammad Fadl, Tamer Taha, Safwat Ahmad, Hamdy Abdelhafez, Waleed Nasser, Zakareya Ahmad, Tariq Khaleel, Abdelqader Mohammad, Bakry Karar, Yehya Suleiman, Magdy Mohammad, Ahmad Abdelmalik, Hamza Hammoud, Hisham Taha, Saleh Ahmad, Mohsin Mohammad, Ammar Abdennaem, Mohammad Hussein, Mostafa Taha, Fahd Sayyed, Khaleefa Khaleefa, Yasser Mohammad, Magdy Ibrahim, Ezzeddeen Ali, and Fawzy Gaber.

The EU's policy commitments for the protection of HRDs and civil society, the upholding of civil and political rights, and the defence of indigenous peoples, commit us to raise this case with Egyptian authorities. We must urge you and the EU Delegation in Egypt to work in coordination with EU Member States, to call on Egypt to immediately and unconditionally drop all charges against Seham Osman, Mohamed Azmy, Maysara Abdoun and all other peaceful demonstrators. The authorities must carry out an immediate, thorough, transparent and impartial investigation into the death of Gamal Sorour and bring those accountable to justice, in accordance with international standards.

We exhort the Egyptian authorities to cease targeting all human rights defenders in Egypt and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment. We call on you,



Европейски парламент Parlamento Europeo Evropský parlament Europa-Parlamentet Europäisches Parlament
Euroopa Parlament Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο European Parliament Parlement européen Parlaimint na hEorpa
Europski parlament Parlamento europeo Eiropas Parlaments Europos Parlamentas Európai Parlament
Parlament Ewropew Europees Parlement Parlament Europejski Parlamento Europeu Parlamentul European
Európsky parlament Evropski parlament Euroopan parlamentti Europaparlamentet

High Representative to place this priority and the upholding of human rights more generally, at the heart of the EU's engagement with Egypt.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Ana Gomes (S&D)

Petras Austrevicius (ALDE)

Barbara Lochbihler (Greens/EFA)

Barbara Spinelli (GUE/NGL)

Tunne Kelam (EPP)

Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)

Marietje Schaake (ALDE)

Alyn Smith (Greens/EFA)

Heidi Hautala (Greens/EFA)

Brando Benifei (S&D)

Jakop Dalunde (Greens/EFA)

Lynn Boylan (GUE/NGL)

Javier Nart (ALDE)

Liadh Ní Riada (GUE/NGL)

Tamás Meszerics (Greens/EFA)

Norbert Neuser (S&D)

Judith Sargentini (Greens/EFA)

Matt Carthy (GUE/NGL)