

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 2, 2012

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton  
Secretary of State  
2201 C St. NW Ste 7276  
Washington D.C. 20520

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Clinton and Secretary Panetta:

We write to express our serious concerns regarding the December 29, 2011, raids and ongoing investigations by Egyptian authorities on civil society organizations in Egypt. As you know, the 17 raids of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) included U.S.-based Freedom House, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and the International Republican Institute (IRI). These raids constitute an attack on Egyptian civil society writ large and are completely unacceptable. These organizations have carried out important and legitimate programs to help support citizen participation in the transition process – a process approved by the Egyptian people in last year’s referendum.

Egypt has been an important U.S. ally in the Middle East. We appreciate that this period of transition presents many challenges. However, the best way to ensure a stable and secure Egypt that remains a vital partner to the U.S., is through a democratic system where the freedoms of expression, association, religion and assembly are protected.

The actions by the Egyptian Government in this case represent the first time in the 29 years since IRI and NDI were created, and the 70 years since Freedom House’s inception, that these organizations were raided and shutdown. The timing of the raids is especially ironic as NDI and IRI were accredited by Egyptian authorities to observe the just-completed parliamentary elections. Some 400 Egyptian organizations face similarly politically-driven allegations and investigations. The fate of civil society participation in Egypt is clearly at stake.

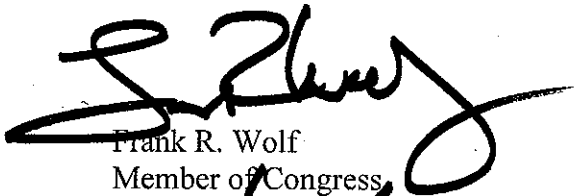
The absence of a quick and satisfactory resolution to this issue will make it increasingly difficult for congressional supporters of a strong U.S.-Egypt bilateral relationship to defend current levels of assistance to Egypt—especially in this climate of budget cuts in Washington. Therefore, we hope that the Egyptian authorities will immediately allow these offices to reopen, return all confiscated property, end the investigations into these organizations and other civil society groups and allow NGOs to carry out their activities in an unfettered manner.

We wish to see a strong and mutually beneficial U.S.-Egyptian relationship, and to do so, we must have confidence that the Egyptian government is “supporting the transition to civilian government including holding free and fair elections; implementing policies to protect freedom

of expression, association and religion; and due process of law," as required in H.R. 2055, the FY 2012 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 112-74). The U.S. should withhold certification until these fundamental human rights are protected, which regrettably seems impossible under the present circumstances.

We look forward to a speedy resolution of this unacceptable situation and stand ready to help in any way we can.

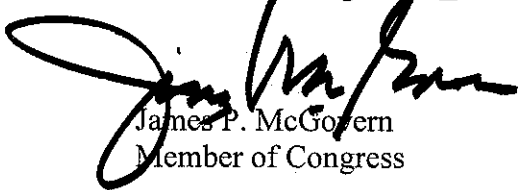
Sincerely,



Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress



Steny H. Hoyer  
Member of Congress



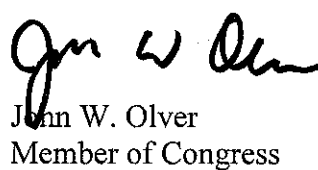
James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



Peter T. King  
Member of Congress



John R. Carter  
Member of Congress



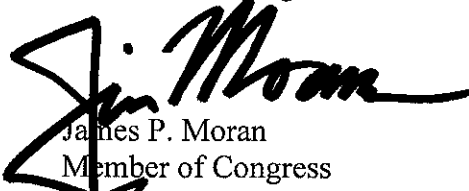
John W. Olver  
Member of Congress



Charles W. Dent  
Members of Congress



Michael M. Honda  
Member of Congress



James P. Moran  
Member of Congress




Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress




Tom Bonner  
Member of Congress





Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress


  
Jeff Duncan  
Member of Congress


  
Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress

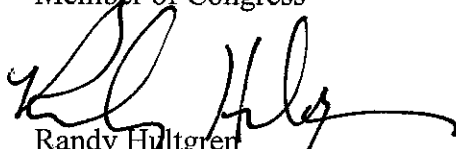
  
William R. Keating  
Member of Congress

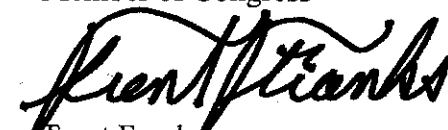
  
Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress


  
Ann Marie Buerkle  
Member of Congress

  
Tim Walberg  
Member of Congress

  
Joseph R. Pitts  
Member of Congress

  
Randy Hultgren  
Member of Congress

  
Trent Franks  
Member of Congress

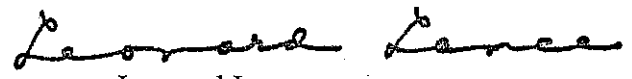
  
Michael T. McCaul  
Member of Congress

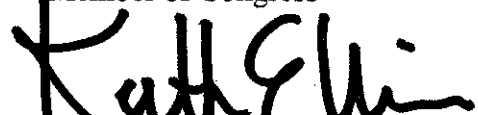
  
Robert J. Dold  
Member of Congress


  
Mike Kelly  
Member of Congress

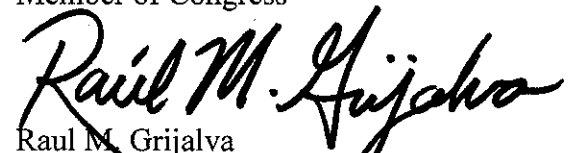
  
Ted Poe  
Member of Congress

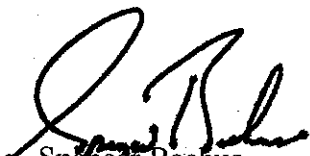
  
Dan Burton  
Member of Congress

  
Leonard Lance  
Member of Congress

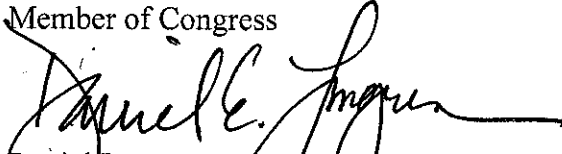
  
Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress


  
Michael E. Capuano  
Member of Congress


  
Raul M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress


  
Spencer Bachus  
Member of Congress


  
Ken Calvert  
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Daniel Lungren  
Member of Congress

  
James F. Sensenbrenner Jr.  
Member of Congress


  
Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

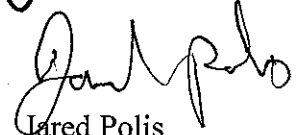
  
Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress

  
Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress

  
Louise McIntosh Slaughter  
Member of Congress

  
Janice D. Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

  
John Shimkus  
Member of Congress

  
Jared Polis  
Member of Congress