

His Excellency
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Ashraf El Kholi
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
26 South Street
London W1K 1DW

31st July 2014

Dear Sir,

Re: Peter Greste, Mohammed Fahmy and Baher Mohamed

We the undersigned are practising members of the Bar of England and Wales. Many of us act on a regular basis for the Government of the United Kingdom; many of us act for claimants in claims against the Government; and many of us act for both the Government and claimants. We are all experienced in dealing with cases involving claims of violations of human rights protected by domestic and international instruments. As barristers, we are personally and professionally committed to the values of justice and the Rule of Law. We are writing to you to express our dismay at the recent sentencing to seven years in prison of the Al Jazeera journalists Peter Greste, Mohammed Fahmy and Baher Mohamed (who also received an additional three-year sentence) on charges of "spreading false news" and "supporting the Muslim Brotherhood".

We note that the Arab Republic of Egypt is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Article 14 of this document enshrines the right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal. It is clear from all of the information available to us that this right has not been respected, but rather has been flagrantly violated, in the case of Messrs Greste, Fahmy and Mohamed (and also, we would add, in that of their fellow journalists who have been tried and sentenced *in absentia*). The media and independent observers (including a representative of Amnesty International) who attended the trial of the above gentlemen have unanimously reported that the proceedings leading up to their conviction and sentence were flawed by numerous procedural irregularities, and also that there was no evidence whatsoever to support the allegations made against them. On the contrary, it appears clear that they were simply undertaking their professional duties as journalists when they were arrested, as they were entitled to do, and that they were entirely innocent of any crime.

We have also noted that the sentencing decision made with respect to the above three men has received swift and widespread condemnation on an international scale, by a very wide number of persons and bodies, including human rights bodies, media organisations and the Governments of Australia, the USA and the UK. We hereby add our collective voice to that expression of condemnation. The conviction and sentencing of Mr Greste, Mr Fahmy and Mr Mohamed represents, we repeat, a flagrant denial of justice and of their right to a fair trial. We call upon the Government that you represent urgently to review their cases, with a view to securing their immediate release.

Yours faithfully,

Alex Bailin QC
Kirsty Brimelow QC
Charles Bourne QC
Andrew Caldecott QC
John Cavanagh QC
Richard Clayton QC
Jason Coppel QC
Robert Engelhart QC
Francis Fitzgibbon QC
Michael Fordham QC
David Forsdick QC
Alison Foster QC
Sir Edward Garnier QC MP
Manjit S Gill QC
Javan Herberg QC
John Hobson QC
Sean Jones QC
Stephen Knafler QC
Andrew Langdon QC
Anthony Lester, Lord Lester of Herne Hill QC
Nathalie Lieven QC
David Lock QC
William McCormick QC
Gavin Millar QC
Stephen Nathan QC
Gordon Nardell QC
Rt Hon Mike O'Brien QC
Jenni Richards QC
Tony Peto QC
Hugh Southey QC
Karen Steyn QC
Paul Stinchcombe QC
Jemima Stratford QC
Tom Weisselberg QC
Sean Wilken QC
David Wolfe QC

Tim Akkouch
Zahra Al-Rikabi
Jack Anderson
Katherine Apps
Timothy Atkinson
Kerry Barker
Alan Bates
John Bate-Williams
Gabriel Beeby
Gerry Bermingham
Anna Bicarregui
Sasha Blackmoor
Sally Anne Blackmore
Doron Blum
David Blundell
Kerry Bretherton

Samantha Broadfoot
Ian Brownhill
Tim Buley
Lisa Busch
Chris Buttler
Catherine Callaghan
David Carter
Benjamin Casey
Greg O Ceallaigh
Daniel Chadwick
Susan Chan
Satnam Choongh
S Chelvan
Sadiya Choudhury
Abigail Cohen
Tim Cooke-Hurle
James Cornwell
Rebecca Clutton
Ben Collins
Philip Conrath
Mary Cowe
Caroline Cross
Philip Dayle
Estelle Dehon
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Laura Davidson
Graham Denholm
Laura Dubinsky
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Toby Fisher
Caoilfhionn Gallagher
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Gwion Lewis
Anna Lintner
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Saleema Mahmood
Nabila Malik
Peter Mant
James Mather
Hui Ling McCarthy
Brent McDonald
Cathryn McGahey
Eric Metcalfe
Jonathan Moffett
Hashi Mohamed
Tim Newman
Edward Nicholson
Nicholas Nicol
Emma Northey
Samuel Okoronkwo
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Andrew Sharland
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Daniel Sills
Matthew Smith

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Paula Sparks
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Harvey Starte
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Claire van Overdijk
John-Paul Waite
Adam Wagner
Richard Wald
Galina Ward
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Cc The Right Hon Philip Hammond MP
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