

Brussels, 20 JUN 2016
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To the signatories of the letter of 29 April concerning the case of Dr Ahmed Abdallah

Dear colleagues,

Thank you for your letter of 29 April regarding the detention of Dr Ahmed Abdallah and the arrest and summons of a high number of protesters, activists and journalists after the protests that took place in Egypt during the month of April to denounce the decision of the Egyptian Government to hand over Tiran and Sanafir Islands to Saudi Arabia.

The EEAS and the EU Delegation in Cairo are closely following the situation and the EU Delegation has been monitoring the different hearings that have taken place so far, both regarding Dr Ahmed Abdallah's case, as well as regarding the protesters of 15 and 25 April.

The detention of Dr Ahmed Abdallah has already been renewed twice by the court, on 7 May and then on 21 May, each time for another 15 days. The Delegation will continue to follow this case closely and monitor the hearings.

You also refer to the arrest of more than 150 persons for participating in the April 15 and 25 protests. On 14 May, they were sentenced to between two and five years in prison. However, on 24 May, a Giza court of appeals overturned the five-year prison sentence for 47 people although maintaining the EGP 100,000 fine for each defendant. There again, the hearings were monitored by the EU Delegation. The Delegation will continue to follow this.

As you know, respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms is essential for the EU. As it was clearly stated in the spokesperson's statement on 2 May after the storming of the Press syndicate's building by the Egyptian security forces, freedom of expression and of peaceful assembly are critical for democracy. We have called the Egyptian authorities to release all those detained for expressing their opinion and to bring the law regulating assembly in line with the Egyptian Constitution that guarantees the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We will continue to closely monitor the situation and to raise the specific case of Dr Abdallah, as well as other cases of concern, with the Egyptian authorities, and insist on our conviction that the respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy is the only guarantee for achieving long-lasting stability and sustainable development.

Yours sincerely,



Federica Mogherini