

United States Department of State

*Assistant Secretary of State for
Near Eastern Affairs*

Washington, D.C. 20520-6258

Monday, June 27, 2016

Dr. Beth Baron
President
Dr. Amy W. Newhall
Executive Director
Middle East Studies Association
1219 N. Santa Rita Ave.
The University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721

Dear Dr. Baron and Dr. Newhall:

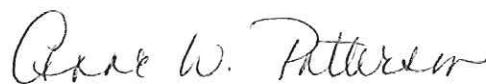
Thank you for your letter of March 29 expressing concern about the plight of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Egypt.

Secretary Kerry shares your concerns and has spoken out about the deteriorating human rights situation in Egypt. He was particularly troubled to see the Egyptian government renew investigations of NGOs over the past several months. We have emphasized the need to enable vibrant civil society activity in Egypt because we believe restrictions on these organizations will bring neither stability nor security. Deputy Secretary Blinken highlighted our concern about the deterioration of human rights in Egypt during the March session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. We have repeatedly raised this issue publicly and privately at all levels with the Egyptian government, and will continue to do so.

Egypt and the United States have common interests in countering transnational threats and promoting stability in an increasingly volatile region. Given its geography, population, and influence, Egypt's success or failure impacts the prospects for peace, stability, democracy, and economic growth across the Middle East and North Africa. Please be assured that we continue to take steps to assess and refine our assistance to Egypt, which includes support for education, civil society, and economic growth that benefit the Egyptian people.

We appreciate hearing from you on our mutual concerns over Egypt.

Sincerely,



Anne W. Patterson