



Conviction of Al Jazeera Journalists

Press Statement

John Kerry

Secretary of State

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Today's conviction and chilling, draconian sentences by the Cairo Criminal Court of three Al Jazeera journalists and fifteen others in a trial that lacked many fundamental norms of due process, is a deeply disturbing set-back to Egypt's transition. Injustices like these simply cannot stand if Egypt is to move forward in the way that President al-Sisi and Foreign Minister Shoukry told me just yesterday that they aspire to see their country advance.

As I shared with President al-Sisi during my visit to Cairo, the long term success of Egypt and its people depends on the protection of universal human rights, and a real commitment to embracing the aspirations of the Egyptians for a responsive government. Egyptian society is stronger and sustainable when all of its citizens have a say and a stake in its success. Today's verdicts fly in the face of the essential role of civil society, a free press, and the real rule of law. I spoke with Foreign Minister Shoukry again today to make very clear our deep concerns about these convictions and sentences.

Yesterday, President al-Sisi and I frankly discussed these issues and his objectives at the start of his term as President. I call on him to make clear, publicly, his government's intention to observe Egypt's commitment to the essential role of civil society, a free press, and the rule of law. The Egyptian government should review all of the political sentences and verdicts pronounced during the last few years and consider all available remedies, including pardons.