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Catherine Ashton

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Open letter to Catherine Ashton

Dear Ms Ashton,

For decades the people of Egypt have been engaged in a nonviolent struggle for their right to freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, free elections, freedom of speech and the press and against torture, corruption and social evils - now the time for change appears to have come.

The forces of opposition in the country have joined together and elected Nobel laureate Mohammed El Baradei to head a committee to negotiate with the government.

We urge and beg you to take a clear position and withdraw your support from President Hosni Mubarak and his regime, which has no future. The regime's human rights violations have long been known and have in no way abated. On the contrary, in the last few days alone the regime is responsible for at least 300 deaths and 3000 injured, as well as torture, massive curtailment of freedom of speech and assembly and a total shutdown of the internet and telecommunications. The regime is also responsible for robbery and arson perpetrated by undercover police forces and has released dangerous criminals in order to incite greater chaos. Today well-organized, armed gangs have caused a bloodbath among peaceful demonstrators.

We consider it absolutely necessary that Egyptian civil society be allowed the free exercise of its fundamental rights. It is of fundamental importance that the European Commission uses its influence to this end and we plead with you support this process - the erection of an independent judiciary and all other structures necessary for the protection of human rights. Use your influence to insure that human rights are respected in Egypt. This involves giving neither verbal nor financial support to a government that oppresses the populace.

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It is essential that a temporary government of the opposition parties be installed immediately, which is able to insure adherence to human rights and to prepare for free elections.

In addition we ask you to insure that in the future Egypt develops a policy of peace towards Israel, towards a future Palestinian state and towards all the nations in the region, and that Egypt no longer participates in the blockade of Gaza.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Holger Klee'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

(Holger Klee, executive secretary)