

STATEMENT ON THE RELEASE OF MOHAMED SOLTAN

We are extremely pleased that the Egyptian Government has released our client, Mohamed Soltan, a United States citizen wrongfully detained for nearly two years and sentenced to life in prison for simply participating in peaceful protests and facilitating their media coverage. We at Lewis Baach, including Eric Lewis, Brad Glassman, and Waleed Nassar, have worked together with U.S. State Department officials, as well as NGOs and other international institutions and public figures from Europe to the Middle East, to negotiate a legal strategy to secure Mohamed's return to the United States. Today, he is flying to Washington to be reunited with his family.

Mohamed, 27, was arrested and detained in August of 2013 after assisting various news organizations, including Aljazeera, ABC, the *New York Times*, and *Time*, in their coverage of the protests following the military-led ouster of Egypt's elected President Mohamed Morsi. Mohamed was then improperly charged with participating in a plan to overthrow the nascent military regime and was tried alongside 50 other political prisoners in a Kafkaesque political show trial. He protested the deplorable conditions of his incarceration and his abuse in custody with the first and longest hunger strike in the Egyptian prison system. Mohamed was the only U.S. citizen on hunger strike in Egypt.

As was clear from the outset, Mohamed's case was inextricably intertwined with the recent political events in Egypt. No credible evidence was ever presented to warrant his detention, nor did Mohamed's trial approach internationally recognized minimum standards of due process. Despite this, Mohamed was summarily convicted and sentenced to life in prison, drawing the swift condemnation of the U.S. State Department and the White House, which called for his "immediate release from prison." Human Rights Watch, which closely reviewed the 107-page government file in this case, concluded that Mohamed's sentence was "politically motivated" and "blatantly unjust." Eric Lewis, who recently visited Mohamed in prison in Cairo, stated, "Mohamed was clearly a prisoner of conscience who rendered valuable assistance to foreign newsgatherers during the chaotic events of 2013. His actions were entirely legal and in the finest traditions of freedom of expression."

Lewis Baach applauds the efforts made by the United States government to secure Mohamed's release and is pleased by the important gesture made by the Egyptian government to send him home. Mohamed's release ultimately serves as an affirmation that his participation in peaceful protests and his work as a citizen journalist and translator were entirely within the law. We are honored to have been able to assist in the realization of justice for Mohamed and in facilitating his long-overdue release.

For further inquiries, please contact Eric Lewis (eric.lewis@lewisbaach.com) or Waleed Nassar (waleed.nassar@lewisbaach.com).

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