

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 8, 2019

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo,

The United States and Egypt have shared a strategic partnership for more than four decades. As you prepare for Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi's trip this month, it is critical to stress that our partnerships are stronger and more sustainable when rooted in shared values, including democratic governance, political and economic freedom, and fundamental human rights for all citizens. We are writing to encourage you to address three pressing issues concerning developments with President Sisi.

First, Egypt has unjustly detained at least a dozen Americans. It is simply unacceptable for a foreign government to unjustly detain American citizens and deny them fundamental legal and political rights. We request that you ask that these Americans be released.

Second, we are concerned about Egypt's reported purchase of 20 Russian Sukhoi SU-35s. As the United States provides significant military assistance to Egypt, we are concerned about their deepening relationship with Russia, which also includes the loan that Moscow has provided to construct the nuclear power plant at Dabaa. We request that you ask President Sisi to reevaluate these decisions, which risk making his country a Russian dependency once again.

Third, we have serious concerns about the erosion of political and human rights. Notably, if adopted, proposed amendments to Egypt's constitution that the parliament is currently considering would erode the independence of Egypt's judiciary, giving President Sisi the power to hand-select the heads of judicial bodies, and may ultimately allow President Sisi to extend his rule until 2034. The proposed amendments would also expand the military's influence over government, politics, and society, conferring responsibility of "protecting" the constitution, democracy and the "civilian" nature of the state. We urge you to ask President Sisi to reconsider his support for these amendments and the fast-tracked process through which they are being considered, and to uphold democratic governance, including the independence of the judiciary. We also hope you will stress the importance of promoting a free and transparent political process and stress the important role of human rights and civil society in building a more resilient and prosperous country.

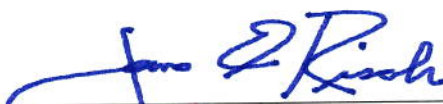
There is strong, bipartisan support in Congress for a security partnership with Egypt that addresses our shared challenges and twenty-first century threats. Furthermore, the Egyptian government should be commended for its adherence to the Peace Treaty with Israel, its role in brokering ceasefires between Israel and Hamas, and its provision of military privileges to the United States, as well as its commitment to economic and regional energy reforms that are vital to Egypt's long-term economic health.

A strong and sustainable U.S.-Egypt strategic partnership is vital for both countries, but it requires Egypt to make a tangible effort to make those reforms. We welcome President Sisi's visit during this critical time and encourage a frank and open dialogue with our strategic partner.

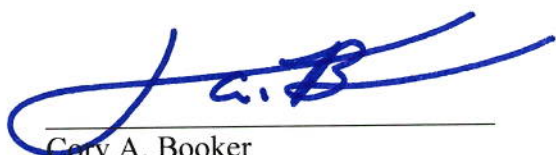
Sincerely,



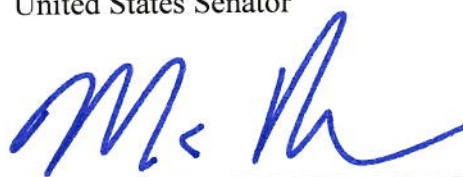
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



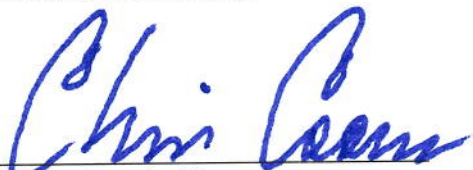
James E. Risch
United States Senator



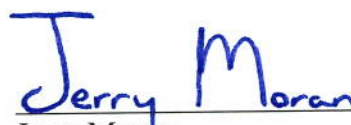
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



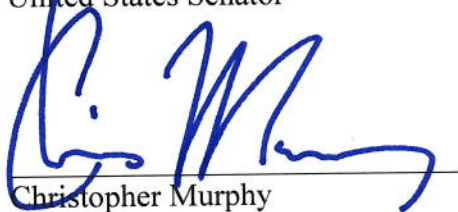
Marco Rubio
United States Senator



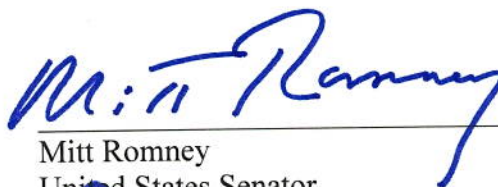
Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Jerry Moran
United States Senator



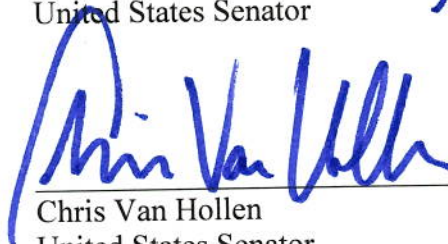
Christopher Murphy
United States Senator



Mitt Romney
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



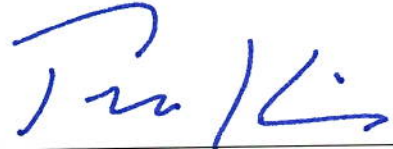
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator




Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Cory Gardner
United States Senator