

November 29, 2006

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Department of State
Washington, DC

Dear Secretary Rice:

We respectfully urge you to take swift action to secure the freedom of Libyan prisoner of conscience Fathi Eljahmi. According to Human Rights Watch, he may face the death penalty after being charged with meeting with a foreign official and "defaming" Libyan leader Col. Muammar Qaddafi.

Fathi was jailed in 2002 after he reportedly stated that reform within Libya would never take place in the absence of a constitution, pluralism and democracy. He was released on March 12, 2004. At the time, President Bush said his release was "an encouraging step toward reform in Libya."

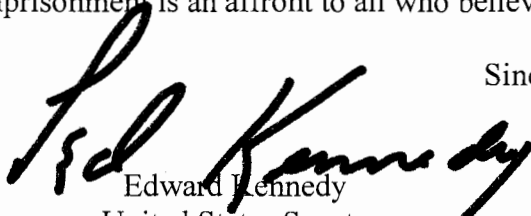
After his release, he gave several media interviews in which he continued to call for reform within Libya. Two weeks later, on March 26, he was abducted from his home by Libyan security forces and returned to prison. The Libyan regime has been unresponsive to concerns voiced by governments and human rights organizations about the circumstances of his arrest and imprisonment.

An engineer and former provincial governor, Fathi is 65 years old. He suffers from diabetes, hypertension and heart disease. He has been held in solitary confinement at an internal security facility for close to two years. Both Physicians for Human Rights and his family report that he is receiving inadequate health care and his life may be in danger. His family has been made to suffer as well. They have allegedly lost their business and remain under constant surveillance.

We are concerned that broad security laws are used in Libya to prosecute people for peaceful political and religious activities. As you know, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that all people have the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly and association. In Libya, joining a political party or an independent labor union are crimes punishable by death.

The United States has now restored diplomatic relations with Libya. We urge you to use this opportunity to bring about the immediate and unconditional release of Fathi Eljahmi and all prisoners of conscience in Libya. Fathi Eljahmi's continued imprisonment is an affront to all who believe in democracy and freedom of expression.

Sincerely,



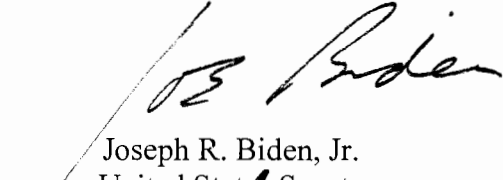
Edward Kennedy
United States Senate



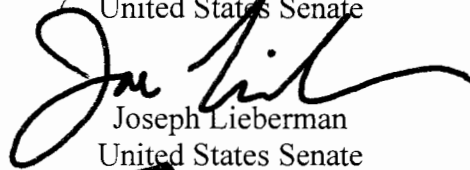
Jon Kyl
United States Senate



Martin T. Meehan
U.S. House of Representatives



Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
United States Senate



Joseph Lieberman
United States Senate



Frank Wolf
U.S. House of Representatives

Amnesty International
Human Rights Watch
Foundation for Defense of Democracies
Middle East Freedom Forum
Committee on Present Danger
Canadian Journalists for Free Expression - Canada
Rights & Democracy - Canada
Physicians for Human Rights - USA
Middle East Media Research Institute
American Islamic Congress
Canadian Coptic Association - Canada
American Islamic Forum for Democracy
Center for Freedom in the Middle East
Center for Liberty in the Middle East
Instituto Prensa y Sociedad (Institute for Press and Society, IPYS) - Peru
Derechos Human Rights
Equipo Nizkor
Project Disappeared
Aliran Kesedaran Negara (Malay for National Consciousness Movement) - Malaysia
Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) - Hong Kong
Ibn Khaldun Center - Egypt
Kenya Human Rights Commission - Kenya
Lawyers for Human Rights - South Africa
Think Centre - Singapore
Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network
Libyan League for Human Rights - Germany

International Federation of Health and Human Rights Organisations (IFHHRO)

International Commission of Jurists - Switzerland

European Roma Rights Centre - Hungary

International Society for Human Rights - Germany

Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights - Poland

The Norwegian Helsinki Committee - Norway

International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF) - Austria

European Foundation for Democracy

Kurdish Human Rights Project - UK

Kyrgyz Committee for Human Rights - Austria

Sudan Organisation Against Torture - UK