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March 4, 2008

His Excellency Mohammed Hosni Mubarak
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
Cairo, EGYPT

Dear President Mubarak,

I seek your assistance in repatriating a criminal alien currently in custody in my home state of Pennsylvania. I recognize that, as a rule, Egypt is quite cooperative in repatriation efforts and that, in this case, the source of the problem is the prisoner's refusal to cooperate in obtaining travel documents. Nevertheless, I am hopeful we might work together to overcome the obstacles and secure his prompt return.

Mr. Abdel Fattah entered the United States on a fraudulent Portuguese passport. He was convicted in 2002 of an aggravated felony and is now serving his sentence at the Pennsylvania State Correctional Facility in Camp Hill. Because he has already served the required minimum sentence, he is now eligible for repatriation. Accordingly, the administrative body responsible for overseeing repatriation, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), requested travel documents from the Egyptian consulate in New York in early October of 2005. That request included form I-217, which contained substantial biographical information. In 2006, ICE augmented the filing with formal proof that Mr. Fattah's Portuguese passport was fake.

However, as part of the repatriation process and because Mr. Fattah does not have an Egyptian passport, he was required to fill out a passport request form in Arabic. In 2006, the Egyptian consulate advised ICE that the information Mr. Fattah provided in his passport request was insufficient. Mr. Fattah was asked to correct the problems and after some further communication, the final version was resubmitted on June 28, 2007. In August, the consulate informed ICE that Mr. Fattah had again improperly completed the form, filling it instead with gibberish and expletives, and that consequently travel documents would not issue unless ICE could produce an existing Egyptian passport belonging to Mr. Fattah.

Based on its research, ICE is confident that Mr. Fattah is an Egyptian national. Indeed, in a 2001 letter from prison, Mr. Fattah asked immigration authorities to let him "serve the time in my country Egypt." Nevertheless, I fully understand Egypt's desire to satisfy itself of that fact before it repatriates him. Although the ordinary methods of confirming nationality—either via an existing passport or a valid passport application—are not feasible in this case, I am hopeful we may find an alternative way to verify Mr. Fattah's status.

I could, for example, arrange for a visit to the prison by Egyptian experts who could then conduct an extensive background interview of Mr. Fattah in Arabic. If that is inconvenient, the prison has video conferencing equipment and could make Mr. Fattah available for remote interviews by your officials in New York, Washington or Egypt. Alternatively, if there is another arrangement your government would prefer I stand ready to assist.

Ordinarily, I might not intervene in such a matter, especially given Egypt's well-established cooperation in repatriation, but Mr. Fattah's detention cost over \$250,000 last year and is draining scarce local resources. I would appreciate anything you can do to speed his return. You can reach me in my office at _____ and my staff is prepared to assist you. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Arlen Specter", written in a cursive style.

Arlen Specter
United States Senator