

OCUFA

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des Associations des Professeurs des Universités de l'Ontario

September 30, 2013

The Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Harper;

On behalf of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA), I am writing to urge you to intensify your efforts to free John Greyson and Dr. Tarek Loubani, two Canadian citizens unjustly imprisoned in Egypt.

On September 29, 2013 – the same day that John and Tarek's detention was arbitrarily extended by Egyptian authorities – faculty leaders from 27 faculty associations across Ontario unanimously endorsed a motion calling for “immediate, strong, and decisive action” to free these valued colleagues and inspirational humanitarians. I know you and your office have expressed concern over their imprisonment, and I hope that you will now intervene directly to secure their release.

At the time of their arrest, John and Tarek were on their way to the Gaza Strip for a medical and academic partnership with a local hospital. They have now been in an over-crowded, vermin infested, and unsanitary prison for 46 days, and have been on a hunger strike for nearly two weeks. They have yet to be charged with an offense, and the Egyptian authorities have not even provided a reasonable explanation for their arrest. It is clear that conventional diplomacy has not proved effective in this case. Ontario's 17,000 professors and academic librarians urge you to consider taking additional political and economic actions to secure the release of John and Tarek.

We are not alone in this request; thousands of Canadians, from all walks of life, have expressed concern over this case. I hope you will do everything in your power to return these citizens home. If OCUFA can be of any assistance in this matter, we stand ready to help however we can.

Yours sincerely,



Kate Lawson, President
Ontarian Confederation of University Faculty Associations

cc:

The Honourable John Baird, Minister of Foreign Affairs Canada