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Mr John F. Kerry

Secretary of State

U.S. Department of State

2201 C Street NW

Washington, DC 20520

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2013

Dear Secretary of State

Yesterday more than 51 people were killed by the Egyptian Army that had earlier staged a coup d'état against the country's democratically-elected president. This same Army has suspended the country's constitution ratified by the majority of the Egyptian people. The Army also shut-down TV stations and arrested dozens of political activists.

All the above is nothing short of a power grab by the Egyptian Army which used the pretext of a popular uprising against the incumbent President. The Army has also found it expedient to stability and preventing chaos to strengthen its power and control. Sadly we are in fact witnessing a dramatic escalation in violence and instability.

From our long and informed experience with the politics of the Middle East, we can assure you that circumventing people's freedom and violating their human rights will only lead to violence, instability and antagonism towards the democratic values we all share and aspire for all over the world.

We all remember how Algeria's stability and civil harmony was shattered in the 1990s when the army decided to overturn the democratic process simply because the Algerian people chose the "undesired" political party. Unfortunately many Western countries did not stand firm to oppose this illegal and ill-fated policy of the proponents of military rule and dictatorship. As a result nearly 200,000 innocent lives were lost along with the country's peace and civil harmony. Furthermore, hundreds of thousands of young Algerians were forced to flee their country across the Mediterranean for a better life. This, from a country whose population is much smaller than that of Egypt.

Upholding democracy in the Middle East is an important cornerstone of the United State's foreign policy. We recognise the sensitivity of the situation and the critical



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balance of international relations, but inaction or giving mixed signals will only encourage others to turn back the wheel of progress towards democracy and freedom in the Middle East. The pursuit of freedom and democracy have to be assured and respected for *all* people so that those with alternative or extreme views are assured of the merits of democracy and given a space to rethink their strategy.

The African Union voted overwhelmingly on Friday to suspended Egypt's membership in the union for ousting an elected president and suspending the constitution.

It is time for the United States to do the same. We believe that America with its reputation as the leader of the free world has to take the lead in denouncing this illegal and unconstitutional act. We are sure that this morally and ethically weighted position will boost confidence in democracy in the Middle East and dampen the drive towards extremism and violence.

We look forward to your reply.

Thank you.

Sincerely

Dr Anas Altikriti

CEO

The Cordoba Foundation