

Beat: News

THE US IS DISAPPOINTED AND CONCERNED BY THE EGYPTIAN COURT VERDICT

ON AL JAZEERA 3 JOURNALISTS AFFAIR

Paris, Washington DC, 30.08.2015, 23:22 Time

USPA NEWS - The United States is deeply disappointed and concerned by the verdict handed down by an Egyptian court to the three AlJazeera journalists - Mohamed Fahmy, Baher Mohamed, and Peter Greste. The freedom of the press to investigate, report, and comment is fundamental to any free society, said John Kirby

The freedom of the press to investigate, report, and comment "" even when its perspective is unpopular or disputed "" is fundamental to any free society and essential to democratic development. We urge the Government of Egypt to take all available measures to redress this verdict, which undermines the very freedom of expression necessary for stability and development. Said John Kirby US Department Spokesperson. The United States is deeply disappointed and concerned by the verdict handed down by an Egyptian court to the three Al-Jazeera journalists - Mohamed Fahmy, Baher Mohamed, and Peter Greste. "The freedom of the press to investigate, report, and comment "" even when its perspective is unpopular or disputed "" is fundamental to any free society and essential to democratic development." - State Department Spokesperson John Kirby.

CONTEXT AL JAZEERA JOURNALISTS

For Al Jazeera journalists Baher Mohamed, Mohamed Fahmy and Peter Greste, justice has been denied again.

"A retrial widely criticised and condemned by the White House, the EU and the United Nations has resulted in a guilty verdict. The Cairo court sentenced the journalists to at least three years in prison. Greste, who was tried in absentia and deported to Australia, will avoid imprisonment. Six other Al Jazeera journalists have also been convicted in absentia. The verdict has been described as a deliberate attack on press freedom. So, was this a political trial? And should journalists be locked up for doing their job?"

JOURNALISTS FORGIVEN OR DEPORTED THAT'S THE QUESTION-----

MM. Fahmy, 41, and Mohamed, 31 -who has received a sentence of six months extra because he was in possession of a pistol bullet picked up at a manifestation-, were arrested in court after the verdict, before an audience in shock.

According to the french press, Mr. Fahmy, who in the past has worked for CNN, said they were unaware that their employer did not have the required permissions and that the management has never made aware. The journalist, who holds Canadian citizenship, renounced his Egyptian citizenship to be expelled too. Without success.

"President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, the former army chief architect of the removal of Mr. Morsi, had acknowledged that it would have been better to expel reporters rather than judging them. The case began in crisis between Egypt and Qatar, at loggerheads since the ouster of Morsi. Egyptian authorities blamed Qatar to support the Muslim Brotherhood, particularly through Al Jazeera, the Arabic channels denounced the removal of Mr. Morsi and the bloody repression that befell his supporters and killed more than 1400 dead." According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), at least 18 journalists, mostly accused of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood, are currently detained in Egypt. "This is a dangerous precedent in Egypt (see) that journalists can be imprisoned for simply reporting information," said Amal Clooney after the verdict.

Source Al Jazeera and Agencies

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-5070/the-us-is-disappointed-and-concerned-by-the-egyptian-court-verdict.html>

Editorial office and responsibility:

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Rahma Sophia Rachdi

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619