

A MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT OBAMA

Contributed by Coalition of Coptic Organizations
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Press Release

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Peace in the Middle-East Inseparably Linked to Peace for the Coptic Christians of Egypt

Dear President Obama,

Your speech to the Islamic World from Cairo on June 4, 2009 was historic. You were the first American President to identify and to address the plight of Egypt's Coptic Christians by name. Now you have the chance to translate your words into actions.

On August 18, 2009, President Mubarak will visit you in the White house to discuss plans for peace in the Middle East. We wish you success as we fully understand world peace is impossible without peace in the Middle East. However, we want to remind you of a woefully neglected issue that is critical to peace in the region.

The Copts of Egypt total around 12 million representing approximately 15% of Egypt's population of 80 million. Yet, they have been neglected and marginalized and most commonly are targeted for systematic discrimination and persecution.

- 15% of Egypt's population is represented by less than ¼ % of its parliamentary elected officials. Mr. Mubarak has done nothing to rectify the shameful imbalance.

- During the Mubarak Era, Copts have suffered over 200 major terrorist attacks on their persons, homes, businesses and churches. Most often, perpetrators are not arrested, and those arrested are seldom convicted. The attacks are on the increase with over 20 occurring within the last 3 months alone.

- A government policy limits hiring and promoting Copts to high ranking jobs. Many influential positions are completely out

of reach for Christians.

- An antiquated law from the Ottoman Empire governs church constructions and refurbishing. Building a new church requires a Presidential Decree and repairing existing ones requires permits from regional governors.

President Obama,

Please remind Mr. Mubarak that while it is nice to help others, charity begins at home. The Coptic citizens of his nation are badly in need of his intervention to address their plight. Without solving the Coptic issue there will be no real peace in the Middle East.

Coptic organizations will hold a peaceful protest in front of the main gate of the White House on Pennsylvania Avenue between Madison and 15th street, on Tuesday, August 18th, from 10.00am - 4:00pm

Coalition of Coptic Organizations

For more information, contact:

In Washington: Magdi Khalil (202) 725- 3091

In Los Angeles: Mounir Bishay (310) 641- 3387