

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 24, 2013

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

The recent transfer of four F-16 Block 52 fighter jets to the Egyptian Armed Forces is troubling, and future deliveries of the remaining sixteen jets scheduled to be completed by the end of 2013 should be delayed until Congress has had time to review further this Foreign Military Sale. The fact that conditions have changed significantly and substantively since this sale was initially approved merits closer scrutiny of this proposed action as other partners and allies look to see if our aid and assistance continues to be based on principle.

On December 17, 2012, I wrote Secretary of State Clinton requesting that the State Department delay the planned transfer of four of the twenty F-16s to Egypt until further review of this transfer could occur. On January 8, 2013, I received a response from State which denied my request, and read in part, that "Egypt continues to play an important role in regional peace and stability." I disagree.

Last September, you expressed similar concerns when you said of Egypt, "I don't think that we would consider them an ally, but we don't consider them an enemy." Under Muslim Brotherhood President Morsi, there has been constant instability, and the systematic exclusion and silencing of all official minority political opposition. This has resulted in massive street protests, and the passage of a new constitution that has been widely criticized as lacking any protection of minority political or religious rights. In addition, recent and repeated anti-semitic and anti-Israel statements by Egyptian government leaders, including President Morsi, calls into serious question whether this government will uphold its commitments under the Camp David Peace Accords, which has kept the peace in the Middle East between these two countries for over four decades.

I ask that you direct the Department of State to delay for further review the transfer of the remaining 16 F-16s to Egypt. Congress and our military leadership need to understand completely the direction of the Egyptian government, alignment of Egypt with our national security interests, and the impact of continuing to arm an actor moving in an uncertain direction.

I look forward to your response.



James M. Inhofe
United State Senator