

EBRD response regarding EBRD operations in Egypt despite continued human rights violations

From:

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To:

Mark Fodor
Executive director
CEE Bankwatch Network

(sent via email on January 6, 2014)

Dear Mr Fodor,

Thank you for your email of 23 December addressed to the EBRD President, Sir Suma Chakrabarti. The President has asked me to respond on his behalf.

First of all, I would like to assure you that the EBRD closely monitors political and economic developments in Egypt and management regularly reports on them to the Board of Directors. Like many of the Bank's shareholders and key stakeholders, we have been concerned by the recent raid on the offices of the Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights.

The EBRD affirms its support for a sustainable democracy that meets the aspirations of the Egyptian people. We take our Article 1 mandate very seriously, and aim to provide on a regular basis balanced assessments of countries' commitment to and application of principles of multiparty democracy and pluralism. When we have significant concerns about conformity with these principles, we say so in our public political assessments as well as in private dialogue with the authorities in our countries of operations. However, it has always been the EBRD's shareholders view that the Bank has to remain engaged, even in the most difficult environments to the extent it can to foster market-oriented transition. We believe that promoting the development of a dynamic private sector is the best way to enhance the sustainability of the transition process, which we recognise proceeds at different paces in different countries.

We have undertaken in June 2013 a political assessment of the commitment of the Egyptian authorities to the EBRD's Article 1. And we expect to undertake a new assessment of Egypt's compliance with the political and economic aspects of Article 1 in 2014 in the context of the Bank's shareholders decision on making Egypt a full country of operations. Your organisation' and other civil society stakeholders' input into that process will be an important part of our assessment of the transition challenges, business environment and political context in the country.

Yours sincerely,

Olga Filippova