



AMERICAN MUSLIMS FOR PALESTINE

EMPOWERMENT through
EDUCATION and **ACTION**

American Muslims for Palestine
10101 S. Roberts Road
Palos Hills, IL 6-465

February 9, 2015

Honorable Judge Gershwin Drain:

As an organization that advocates for human rights and social justice, the American Muslims for Palestine (AMP) has worked with Rasmea Odeh for many years. Chicago activists are a tightly knit community and we very often work on the same issues and attend the same events. It is in this capacity that I and several members of this organization have known Rasmea for several years. Therefore, I am writing to request mercy for Rasmea during her March 10, 2015 sentencing.

Rasmea is a beloved member of our community. We have a great deal of respect for her and the work she has done to help thousands of immigrant women to assimilate to their new homes in the United States. We have seen Rasmea help dozens of women from our communities to learn English, and to find resources so they can establish themselves as productive members of our society.

As Rasmea appeals her November 2014 conviction, we are asking you for mercy for the 67-year-old by allowing her to remain out of prison during the appeal process. When Rasmea was incarcerated immediately after her conviction, she spent three weeks out of four in solitary confinement. This was a major hardship for her; she lost at least 15 lbs., and began suffering from her diabetes and a back ailment. The isolation caused the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, the result of brutal torture she endured in Israeli prison, to once again haunt her. The Chicago community offers Rasmea broad support, which is crucial to her emotional and physical health.

If Rasmea loses her appeal, she will likely lose her citizenship and face deportation. This will end life as she knows it, cutting all her ties with family and community in Chicago. This punishment alone is so devastating, it should not be compounded by incarcerating her during the appeal process.

Dear Judge Drain, we at AMP are appealing to you sense of mercy, compassion and justice by asking you to allow Rasmea to remain free during her appeal process. Society would be better served by allowing Rasmea to continue her work to help immigrant women find their place in the fabric of American life.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our request.

Respectfully yours,

Nida Sahouri
AMP-Chicago Chairwoman

