



Council on American-Islamic Relations
Chicago Office
17 N. State Street, Suite 1500, Chicago, IL 60602
Tel 312.212.1520 Fax 312.212.1530 cairchicago.org

Ahmed Rehab, Executive Director
Council on American-Islamic Relations, Chicago office (CAIR-Chicago)
17 N. State Street, Suite 1500
Chicago, IL 60602

February 6, 2015

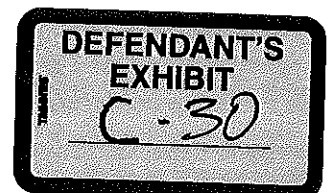
RE: Request for Leniency
USA v. Odeh, CR-2:13-20772

Dear Honorable Judge Gershwin Drain,

I am writing to request leniency from you in the March 10 sentencing of Rasmea Odeh, who I know as a community leader in Chicago.

Ms. Odeh is a dedicated and outstanding advocate for immigrant women in Chicago. She created the Arab Women's Committee, which has been nationally recognized as a successful model for the assimilation of Arab female immigrants into large urban communities. She has strong family ties and has developed a large group of friends, allies and community partners during the past years in Chicago, who have come to know her as a gentle, compassionate and caring individual.

- In November 2014, Rasmea was convicted of Unlawful Procurement of Naturalization. I am asking for compassion in her sentencing, as the only way to serve justice in this case. She was detained for a month immediately following the verdict, including almost 3 weeks in solitary confinement, which was extremely difficult for her.
- As a survivor of torture, engagement for the betterment of her community in Chicago is critical to her emotional health; the isolation she endured while incarcerated was a great hardship and may have retriggered her Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
- As a 67-year old woman, her health suffered under the cold, damp, and uncomfortable conditions in the St. Clair County Jail, as they surely would in any facility lacking medical services and accommodations to provide for senior citizens.
- 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 adding a prison term.



- Since there is a possibility of her conviction being overturned on appeal, keeping her out of prison would allow her to continue as a contributing and productive person, doing the work that is so critical to hundreds of refugee women in Chicago's Arab and Muslim community.

Sincerely,



Ahmed Rehab
Executive Director

