

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 9, 2023

President Bola Tinubu
Federal Republic of Nigeria
Aso Villa
Three Arms Zone 900103
Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Your Excellency,

We write to express our congratulations on your recent inauguration as Nigeria's 16th president. Your new government brings high hopes to your country and your people. We look forward to working with you and your administration to strengthen effective cooperation between Nigeria and the United States.

However, we write now to bring to your attention the urgent problem of the continued detention of Mubarak Bala, a Nigerian citizen and humanist serving a 24-year prison sentence for peacefully exercising his fundamental rights to freedom of speech, religion and conscience.

As you may be aware, Mubarak is a strong proponent of free expression and the separation of church and state in Nigeria. He has campaigned against blasphemy laws, educated people about human rights, and spoken out on the dangers of religious extremism. As Mubarak became one of the country's most prominent critics of harmful religious practices, he began receiving death threats. In April 2020 he was arrested, held for more than a year without charge, and denied access to medical care and his legal team. Nigeria's Federal High Court ruled Mubarak's arrest unconstitutional in December 2020 and ordered him released, but the order was ignored. In April 2022, Bala was sentenced to 24 years in prison by the Kano State High Court on charges of causing a public disturbance by posting social media messages critical of Islam.

On May 25, 12 Members of Congress sent a letter calling on your predecessor President Buhari to use his power of clemency to issue a pardon and free Mubarak, a loving husband and father of a three-year-old son, Mubarak has been away from home since his boy was a mere eight weeks old. He remains in detention today.

We respectfully renew the call to free Mubarak and ask you to use the occasion of Democracy Day to take immediate steps to issue a pardon and ensure his safety and well-being upon release. This action would signal to the entire world your dedication to democracy, human rights and the

rule of law at the outset of your term. We send you best wishes for your presidency and hope to hear back from you soon.

Very truly yours,



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Cc: H.E. Dr. Uzoma Emenike
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