

Baa-a-d-d sheep... Egypt slammed for 'sham trial'

NEWSWATCH: Three Al Jazeera journalists imprisoned in Egypt were ordered to undergo a retrial. Their original trial (the 'evidence' included footage of sheep and horses) has been slammed as a sham by international media and the international community, reports *The New York Times*...



The Egyptian authorities have a simple choice...
(Image: Associated Press)

For more:

- *The New York Times*: [Three Al Jazeera journalists remain in jail after Egyptian court orders a retrial...](#) Yesterday, Egypt's highest appeals court ordered a retrial for three imprisoned journalists from Al Jazeera's English-language service. In ordered the retrial, the court, says *The New York Times* 'implicitly acknowledges critical procedural flaws in a case that rights advocates have described, from the men's arrests to their convictions, as a sham.
- *Deutsche Welle*: [Cairo's foreign media bloodied but unbowed...](#) *Deutsche Welle* reports the sentencing of three Al Jazeera English journalists 'has sent shock waves through the Cairo foreign press corps, where journalists say a xenophobic atmosphere had already reigned.

Deutsche Welle quotes Sherine Tadros, a correspondent for Sky News: 'For foreign journalists in Egypt, the sentences that turned their colleagues into the story has [sic] brought a looming sense of sadness, anger and dismay. "At that point, you didn't really want to be a journalist, you didn't want to be reporting anything, you just felt extreme sadness, you felt destroyed," Tadros said, of the moment she heard the verdict in court. "We were reporting the story, but they were our friends.'"

The 'evidence' - holiday pictures, sheep... and a song

Deutsche Welle reports that evidence presented by the prosecution in court included a news conference from Kenya, a BBC documentary from Somalia (which won Greste a Peabody Award) footage of sheep and trotting horses aired by Sky News Arabia.

The 'evidence' is also reported to have included images of Peter Greste's parents on holiday in Germany and Latvia, and the pop song "Somebody I use [sic] to know," by Belgian-Australian artist Gotye.

Deutsche Welle reports that the prosecution asserted they had further evidence but that it could not be shown because they did not have the proper equipment to play it in court.

Meanwhile...

Egyptian authorities urged to make Al Jazeera Three's retrial swift

Al Jazeera has said that the retrial granted today to its jailed journalists should be expedited quickly by the Egyptian authorities. Lawyers say that the appeal process from this point can take another 12-18 months.

After the conviction was overruled by the court of cassation yesterday, Al Jazeera spokesperson Osama Saeed said, "Baher, Peter and Mohammed have been unjustly in jail for over a year now. The Egyptian authorities have a simple choice - free these men quickly, or continue to string this out, all the while continuing this injustice and harming the image of their own country in the eyes of the world. They should choose the former."

Calls for the release of Peter Greste, Mohamed Fahmy and Baher Mohamed have been made by the White House, the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the European Union, the Australian Government and over 150 rights groups, including Amnesty International, the Committee to Protect Journalists and the International Press Institute.

Over 200,000 people have signed petitions globally. Hundreds of thousands of people have also kept the hashtag [#FreeAJStaff](#) viral throughout the last year.

President Sisi has said he is considering using his powers under the Egyptian constitution to release the journalists. This would be separate to the court process. When asked about this possibility in November, he replied, "Let us say that this matter is being discussed to solve the issue." Such a move would be applicable to all of the detained journalists.

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