July 2, 2008

Dear Judge Leonie Brinkema

I am writing because I believe it would be in the interest of justice that Dr. Sami Al-Arian be released on bond pending trial.

I am University Professor of Religion and International Affairs at Georgetown and prior to that Loyola Professor of Middle East Studies at the College of the Holy Cross. I have been a consultant to and spoken on the Middle East and Islam and global terrorism before all of our major government agencies.

I have known Dr. Al-Arian for approximately twenty years. I came to know of Sami Al-Arian's academic status and role at the University of South Florida, the high regard in which he was held as a professor, in conversations with the then Dean of Academic Affairs and others, when the university was attempting to recruit me for a position there. Over the years I encountered Sami on occasion in Washington, at conferences run by Professor (Rabbi) Jacob Neusner at the University of South Florida, and at conferences sponsored by WISE, a think-tank that brought together prominent scholars and experts from academia, the U.S. government, and the media. He also founded and ran a high school whose graduates excelled with remarkable numbers going on to some of the best colleges and universities in our country.

Sami is a dedicated family man. Over the years I have come to know his wife, Nahla, and several of his children, especially Laila and Abdullah who have been students at Georgetown University and worked in our center. Laila went on to earn an MA in Journalism and has worked for Vanity Fair, published articles and co-published a book. Abdullah, a Duke graduate is completing his Ph D at Georgetown. Leena has completed an MA at the University of Chicago and Ali will be an undergraduate there in the Fall.

Sami Al-Arian is a proud, dedicated and committed American as well as a proud and committed Palestinian. He is an extraordinarily bright, articulate, scholar and intellectual-activist, a man of conscience with a strong commitment to peace and social justice. He has been involved not only in the Muslim but also non-Muslim communities locally in Tampa and nationally.

From everything I know Sami has been a model prisoner despite at times some very difficult prison situations and treatment. He has been incarcerated continuously for more than five years. The jury verdict in his trial sent a message domestically and internationally that our system could and did

work. The subsequent failure to accept the recommendation of the government and the defense has put tremendous stress on both Sami and his family. I hope that in the interest of justice and compassion, the court will release him on bond pending trial.

Thank you very much for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

John L. Esposito
University Professor and Director
Georgetown University