

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2006

His Excellency Al Asri Al Dhahri  
Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates  
Embassy of the United Arab Emirates  
3522 International Court, NW  
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

We received your recent response to our letter from last December regarding the arrests of 26 allegedly gay men who had gathered for a party at an Abu Dhabi hotel. We were glad to be reassured on the question of hormone treatment for these suspects, but it seems to us that beyond that, your letter was only a response in a technical sense, in that you wrote back to us. It did not answer the strong concerns we voiced in our letter with regard to active government condemnation of individuals who were doing no harm to themselves or anyone else.

Your letter states that the individuals were "accused of perpetrating acts which violate the laws in force in the UAE." It does not say precisely what laws these men were accused of violating when the police raided their hotel, and we would very much appreciate it if you would tell us that.

We also note that you did not mention that since the time we wrote to you last December, eleven of the men who had been arrested in November were each convicted and sentenced to six years in prison. We are very disappointed in these verdicts, and we think they contradict the claim in your letter of a respect for diversity in the UAE.

Your letter also cites UAE adherence to "international principles and conventions concerning human rights which prohibit the persecution of anyone." We must tell you that we are not aware of any international human rights conventions that condone state-sponsored animus against and persecution of adult men who are or who are believed to be gay.

We ask again for your attention to our concerns, and we also look forward to developing, as you said, a relationship based on open dialogue and respect.



REP. BARNEY FRANK



REP. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN



REP. TOM LANTOS



REP. JAMES A. LEACH



REP. CAROLYN B. MALONEY



REP. GARY L. ACKERMAN