



Dear Friends and colleagues,

We are celebrating two occasions today - the 21st anniversary of the birth day of the Cairo institute, one of the most distinguished and long standing human rights NGOs in the MENA region, as well as honouring one of the most persistent and pioneering human rights defender not only at the Tunisian level but also at the regional and international levels.

Both have been of great assistance to the region and have been contributing to defending and highlighting human rights and concerns in the region. Both have worked actively as an early warning drawing the attention of the international and regional entities to human rights concerns , and in the same time being able to say truth to power with no compromises during very critical moments.

We as OHCHR in general and Tunisia office in particular worked and will continue to work with both in advocating, protection and capacity building in the area of human rights and contributing to widening democratic space, freedom of expression, supporting human rights defenders, rule of law, promoting inclusion rather than exclusion.

Today Tunisia represents a model for the region and beyond and we hope it will continue on the same path with no step back. I believe that we together jointly with other partners in civil society, government as well as lawmakers, will be able to consolidate and capitalize on what had been achieved so far in respecting and reflecting Human Rights in the constitution, and to continue advancing in the right direction Inchallah.

Thank you.