

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 30/17/97

2 April 1997

Further information (7) on UA 208/96 (MDE 30/23/96, 22 August 1996) and follow-ups MDE 30/24/96, 27 August 1996, MDE 30/34/96, 10 October, MDE 30/11/97, 7 March 1997, MDE 30/14/97, 12 March, MDE 30/15/97, 19 March, MDE 30/16/97, 26 March - Fear of ill-treatment/ probable prisoners of conscience/ fear of arrest as POC/"disappearance"/prisoner of conscience/health concern

TUNISIA Abdel Moumen BELANES, student

Amnesty International has received information that the trial of Abdel Moumen Belanes took place on 1 April 1997. The verdict will be given on 8 April 1997.

Abdel Moumen Belanes had been brought to court on 18 March 1997 on charges of disturbing public order. The trial was initially postponed until 25 March 1997, and then further postponed until 1 April 1997.

Amnesty International is concerned that the trial of Abdel Moumen Belanes was not conducted in accordance with international standards for fair trial. The only prosecution witness, a prison guard, was not brought to court in spite of a request from the defence lawyers. This request was made a second time by the lawyers during the trial on 1 April. Furthermore, the defence lawyers reported that statements given by the prison guard and the Director-General of the Prisons Administration, both mentioned in the charge sheet, were missing from the case dossier submitted to them.

Amnesty International is also increasingly concerned for the health of Abdel Moumen Belanes, who has been on hunger strike since 17 March 1997.

Amnesty International believes that Abdel Moumen Belanes, who was previously detained as a prisoner of conscience and tortured at the end of 1995, is again being detained as a prisoner of conscience and should be immediately and unconditionally released.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in French, Arabic, English or in your own language:

- expressing concern for the health of Abdel Moumen Belanes, who is on hunger strike, and seeking assurances that he will be allowed access to medical care if necessary;
- expressing concern that the trial of Abdel Moumen Belanes was not held in accordance with international standards for fair trial;
- continuing to call for the immediate and unconditional release of Abdel Moumen Belanes as a prisoner of conscience.

If possible also:

- reiterating concern that Abdel Moumen Belanes was tortured during a previous period of detention and threatened with torture during secret detention in March 1997 and urging that he not be subjected to torture or ill-treatment during his continuing detention.

APPEALS TO:

1) Minister of Justice
M. Abdallah Kallel
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice

Boulevard Bab Benat
Tunis, Tunisia
Fax: +216 1 568 106
Telex: 13000 maet tn (via Ministère de l'Intérieur)
Telegrams: Ministre de la Justice, Tunis, Tunisie
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency

2) Minister of the Interior

M. Mohamed Ben Rejeb
Ministre de l'Intérieur
Ministère de l'Intérieur
Av. Habib Bourguiba
Tunis , Tunisia
Fax: +216 1 340888
Telegrams: Ministre de l'Interieur, Tunis, Tunisia
Telex: 13662 sdap tn
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Tunisian Human Rights League
Me Taoufik Bouderbala, Président
Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme, LTDH
7 Rue Pierre Curie
Tunis, Tunisia
Fax: + 216 1 336 338

and to diplomatic representatives of Tunisia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 May 1997.