

URGENT ACTION

PROTESTERS ASSAULTED AND DETAINED IN MOROCCO

Several people were assaulted, arrested and detained by security forces on 22 May during peaceful protests in several Moroccan cities. Some have sustained serious injuries.

On 22 May 2011, several protests took place simultaneously in different cities in Morocco such as Fes, Tangiers, Rabat, Casablanca and Tetouan. They demanded an end to corruption and social justice. The protests were called by the 20 February Movement in Morocco, inspired by similar movements for change elsewhere in the region

In all the cities, security forces violently broke-up the demonstrations. They prevented protestors reaching the squares where the protests were supposed to take place, chased protestors, beat them with truncheons and kicked them. According to the information received by Amnesty International, several people were beaten until they were unconscious and many sustained serious injuries. Several protestors were arrested and taken to cars to be transferred to police stations.

At least 23 people are believed to still be in detention at the judicial police, in Tangiers. In Fes, **Nabil Talha**, a 21-year-old student, was arrested by security forces at Hassan II University hospital while he was being treated for injuries he sustained, and is still in detention.

In Tangiers, about 100 people were reportedly detained on 22 May for a few hours. In Fes, dozens were detained after they had sustained serious injuries. In Casablanca, several people were beaten, and at least 29 were arrested and detained at the police stations, and released later that night. In Tetouan, 23 people were detained at a police station and were later released, following a protest organized in front of the governorate. In Rabat, 18 protestors were detained for a few hours and then released the same day.

Amnesty International has also received information that some protestors treated in government-run hospitals were denied copies of the medical reports detailing their injuries, potentially obstructing their efforts to obtain justice and reparation.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Arabic, French or your own language:

- Urging the Moroccan authorities to ensure that a full, independent and impartial investigation into the allegations of physical assaults is conducted and that any officials responsible are held accountable;
- Urging the authorities to release immediately and unconditionally all detainees who are held solely for the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and assembly;
- Urging the authorities to uphold the right of protestors to express their views and demands in a peaceful manner and to instruct security forces not to resort to unjustified or unnecessary force to disperse demonstrations

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 04 JULY 2011 TO:

Minister of Justice

Mohamed Naciri

Place Mamounia

Rabat, Morocco

Fax: +212 537 734 725/ 537 730 772

Salutation: Your Excellency

National Human Rights Council

Idriss Elyazami

President

Place Ach-Chouhada, BP 1341

10 001 Rabat, Morocco

Fax : +212 537 726 856

Salutation: Dear Sir

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 15 May 2011, planned rallies and demonstrations in Rabat, Fes, Tangier and Témara were forcibly dispersed by Moroccan security forces, who used truncheons to break up the protests, as well as kicking and beating the demonstrators. Attempts by protesters to gather in Témara were also blocked by security forces. As a result, scores of people sustained injuries to their heads and other parts of their bodies. Dozens were apprehended by the security forces, detained for few hours and then released. At least two people, brothers Ahmed and al-Mofadhal Shahboun are facing trials in Tangier on unclear charges.

On 12 March 2011 scores were injured and at least 120 were briefly detained when security forces used unjustified force to break up a protest in central Casablanca.

The demonstrations had been organized by the 20 February Movement, which calls for reform in Morocco, inspired by similar movements for change elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa.

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