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### **News Flash**

## **Tunisia: Police assault on Amnesty International's trial observers**

*Two Amnesty International delegates, Jerome Bellion-Jourdan and Philip Luther, were detained and ill-treated by plain clothes security officers while on an official visit to Tunisia to observe the appeal hearing of prominent human rights defender Dr Moncef Marzouki.*

*In the early hours of Saturday 29 September the delegates were stopped in Tunis by traffic police while returning from a meeting with a Tunisian human rights defender. They were then forced by plain clothes security officers into a car without number plates. Later they were pulled out of the car and their belongings, including a computer and all their documents, were forcibly taken. One of the delegates was physically assaulted by a plain clothes officer whilst another officer took his bag. They were then released.*

*Amnesty International has contacted the Tunisian authorities expressing its grave concern at the incident and requested a prompt and thorough investigation as well as assurances that neither the delegates nor people they have been or will be in contact with will endure further harassment. The organization has requested immediate meetings with Tunisian ministers and government officials to discuss the incident. There has been no response to these requests so far.*

*Dr Moncef Marzouki, a member and former spokesperson of the Conseil National pour les Libertés en Tunisie (CNLT), National Council for Liberties in Tunisia, and former president of the Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme (LTDH), Tunisian Human Rights League, had been sentenced in December 2000 in an unfair trial to one year's imprisonment in*

*connection with his human rights activities. At the 29th September hearing attended by the delegates the sentence was suspended. Dr Marzouki, a former presidential candidate, will lose certain civil rights, including the right to stand for elections.*

*\ENDS*

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