

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 30/09/00

9 May 2000

Further information on UA 98/00 (MDE 30/07/00, 28 April 2000) and follow-up (MDE 30/08/00, 4 May 2000) - Fear for safety/ prisoner of conscience/ health concern

TUNISIA Human rights defenders and their relatives

Human rights activists Fathi Chamkhi and Mohamed Chourabi, and photocopy shop owner Iheb el Hani, were released from Mornag prison on 8 May. Jallal Zoughlami is still in prison, reportedly continuing the hunger strike he began on 30 April.

On 9 May Fathi Chamkhi told Amnesty International: "We are so happy about all the support we received. We want to thank all those who supported us, anonymous or famous people. [The Tunisian authorities] released us reluctantly, because of all the international pressure. We will keep on fighting until our organization is authorized."

Fathi Chamkhi is President of the unauthorized organization *Rassemblement pour une Alternative Internationale de Développement* (RAID), Rally for an International Alternative for Development, of which Mohamed Chourabi is a member. They were arrested on 8 April together with Iheb el Hani, and charged with "spreading false information liable to disturb public order, defamation of the authorities, inciting fellow-citizens to violate the laws of the country, and belonging to an unauthorized association."

Their case has not been closed and they are still charged with "spreading false information liable to disturb public order and belonging to an unauthorized association".

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

- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Jallal Zoughlami, who is a prisoner of conscience;
- seeking assurances that Jallal Zoughlami will be given all necessary medical care;
- expressing grave concern at the increased attacks on human rights defenders, lawyers and NGO activists and their relatives, and calling on the Tunisian authorities to put an immediate end to such practices and to allow all human rights defenders to carry out their activities freely, in compliance with international human rights treaties ratified by Tunisia;
- urging the authorities to conduct prompt, full and impartial investigations into the beating and ill-treatment of journalists, lawyers and human rights activists on 25 and 26 April and to bring those responsible to justice.

APPEALS TO:

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Ministère de l'Intérieur
Avenue Habib Bourguiba
1001 Tunis
Tunisia

Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Tunis, Tunisia

Faxes: + 216 1 340 888

E-mail: mint@ministeres.tn

M. Bechir Takkari
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice
31 Boulevard Bab Benat
1006 Tunis
Tunisia
Faxes: + 216 1 568 106
E-mail: mju@ministeres.tn

COPIES TO:

M. Afif Hendaoui
Ministre Délégué chargé des Droits de l'Homme
Bureau du Premier Ministre
Place du Gouvernement
La Kasbah
1006 Tunis
Tunisia

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 20 June 2000.