

EXTERNAL

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Fear for Safety

13 February 1998

TUNISIA Radhia Nasraoui, Human Rights lawyer

On the night of 11-12 February 1998 the office of Radhia Nasraoui, human rights lawyer and mother of two children, was ransacked following a period of increasingly intense harassment and surveillance by security forces. Amnesty International is extremely concerned for her and her family's safety.

All the files relating to her clients, legal codes, books and a computer were stolen. Nothing was apparently taken, however, from colleagues sharing the same office.

Radhia Nasraoui has a long history of harassment and intimidation by security forces in connection with her human rights work. A few days before the incident she had expressed concern that the surveillance by the security forces was more persistent and visible than usual. Her clients have often been questioned and intimidated by the security forces and she has been prevented from leaving the country on some occasions. Her office and home have also previously been broken into or vandalized. In April 1997 her office was broken into and client files and other documents left scattered about; the computer and telephone were stolen. A similar incident occurred in 1994 and in 1995 when the door to her apartment was set alight. In none of these cases were the perpetrators brought to justice. This increasingly serious pattern of incidents involving burglary and vandalism fuels suspicion that these are not ordinary, random crimes

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The pattern of harassment of human rights defenders and activists in Tunisia - including arrest, arbitrary detention and imprisonment, and surveillance - has become increasingly widespread in recent years in an attempt to silence and intimidate them and inhibit their work. In addition, new regulations, both codified and unwritten, have been put into place to further curtail freedom of expression, association and human rights activities.

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

- expressing concern at the pattern of harassment and intimidation to which Radhia Nasraoui has been subjected and seeking assurances that her safety and the safety of her family will be ensured.

APPEALS TO:

1) Minister of Justice
M. Abdallah Kallel
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice
31 Boulevard Bab Benat
1006 Tunis
Tunisia

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Tunis, Tunisia

Faxes: + 216 1 568 106

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency

2) Minister of the Interior

M. Ali Chaouch

Ministre de l'Intérieur

Ministère de l'Intérieur

Avenue Habib Bourguiba

1001 Tunis

Tunisie

Telegrams: Ministre Intérieur, Tunis, Tunisia

Faxes: + 216 1 346 624

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

Faxes: + 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 27 March 1998.