

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 30/17/98

25 June 1998

Further information on UA 59/98 (MDE 30/05/98, 24 February 1998) and follow-ups (MDE 30/06/98, 26 February 1998, MDE 30/07/98, 6 March 1998, MDE 30/10/98, 13 March 1998 and MDE 30/12/98, 30 April 1998) - Fear of torture or ill-treatment / Fear of further possible arrests / Prisoners of conscience and new concern: Health concern

TUNISIA	Qais OUISLATI	Noureddine BENTICHA
	Ali JALLOULI	Chedli HAMMAMI
	Lotfi HAMMAMI	Taha SASSI
	Jalal BOURAOUI	Haikal MANNAL
	Rachid TRABELS	Bourham GASMI
	Ridha OUISLATI	Habib HASNI
	Hinda AAROUI (F)	Imen DEROUICHE (F)
	Najib BACCOUCHI	Afef BEN ROUINA (F)

Charged in absentia: Hamma HAMMAMMI, husband of Radhia NASRAOUI
Abdelmajid SAHRAOUI
Fahem BOUKADDOUS
Radhia NASRAOUI, Lawyer representing the above

There are grave concerns for some of the above-named students who have reportedly recently been severely tortured or are in urgent need of medical attention as a result of earlier torture.

On 16 June 1998 Imen Derouiche, who suffers from a heart condition, was reportedly so badly beaten at the Mannouba Women's Prison in Tunis that she required hospitalization.

The following day, Imen Derouiche, Hinda Aaroui and Afef Ben Rouina subsequently began a hunger-strike lasting three days. During this time they were apparently denied liquids and informed that family visits would not be allowed as long as they continued with the hunger strike.

Lotfi Hammami, who was reportedly tortured during incommunicado detention in February 1998, continues to be denied access to adequate medical care. The methods of torture he was subjected to included having his penis tied with rope which was then pulled causing extreme pain and swelling. He continues to be in pain as a result and, according to the prison doctor who examined him, requires an operation.

The students were arrested between February and April 1998 in connection with student strikes asking for better conditions. They were charged with belonging to a criminal and terrorist gang, holding unauthorized meetings, inciting rebellion, spreading false information aiming to disturb public order, defamation against the authorities and distributing leaflets. Most of them have reportedly been ill-treated during periods of incommunicado detention.

The students are no longer, however, in incommunicado detention and have gained access to a lawyer.

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

- expressing concern at the violence Imen Derouiche has reportedly been subjected to during her detention and urging that such allegations be promptly and fully investigated;
- urging that Lotfi Hammami be given immediate access to a specialist doctor and calling for allegations of torture against him to be promptly and fully investigated;
- urging that the 16 above-named detainees, considered to be prisoners of conscience, be immediately and unconditionally released and that charges against the four others be dropped.

APPEALS TO:

If someone answers the phone on a fax number please say: "je voudrais envoyer un fax, s'il vous plaît"

Minister of Justice

M. Abdallah Kallel

Ministre de la Justice

Ministère de la Justice

31 Boulevard Bab Benat

1006 Tunis, Tunisie

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Tunis, Tunisie

Faxes: + 216 1 568 106

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency

Minister of the Interior

M. Ali Chaouch

Ministre de l'Intérieur

Ministère de l'Intérieur

Avenue Habib Bourguiba

1001 Tunis , Tunisie

Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Tunis, Tunisie

Faxes: + 216 1 354 331

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Tunisian Human Rights League

Me Taoufik Bouderbala,

Président Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme

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7 Rue Pierre Curie

Tunis, Tunisia

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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 6 August 1998.