

EXTERNAL

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EXTRA 64/96

Fear of ill-treatment or torture / Probable  
Prisoner of Conscience

13 May 1996

TUNISIA Frej FENNICHE, human rights activist

Amnesty International is seriously concerned at the arrest and incommunicado detention of Frej Fenniche, executive director of the *Institut arabe des droits de l'homme* (IADH, Arab Institute of Human Rights), which is based in Tunis.

Frej Fenniche was arrested at Tunis airport on 10 May 1996 as he was about to board a plane to France. He had been invited to represent the IADH at a meeting of the *Observatoire méditerranéen des droits de l'homme* (a transnational non-governmental human rights organization) in Montpellier, France. After 24 hours of silence the Tunisian authorities confirmed detaining him at the Ministry of the Interior, and having confiscated some of the documents he was taking to the conference.

In the last two years human rights and political activists in Tunisia have often been prevented by the Tunisian authorities from leaving their country to taking part in international conferences to which they had been invited.

Amnesty International is concerned that Frej Fenniche may be at risk of torture whilst he is being detained in incommunicado detention and that he appears to be held solely on account of his human rights activities.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Arrests, detentions, torture and ill-treatment, imprisonment of prisoners of conscience, unfair trials and systematic harassment have been increasingly used in Tunisia to punish, intimidate and silence opposition political activists, government critics, human rights activists and others in Tunisia over the past few years.

Amnesty International has continued to document and condemn such human rights violations in Tunisia, and to call on the Tunisian authorities to take concrete steps to put an end to such practices. However, despite the Tunisian Government's public statements about its commitment to respecting human rights, no concrete action has been taken to address these concerns.

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

- expressing concern that Frej Fenniche may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment whilst he is held in incommunicado detention, and urging that he be allowed prompt access to his family, lawyers and medical examination;
- expressing concern that he appears to be detained solely on account of his human rights work. If so, he should be released immediately and unconditionally.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

1) Minister of Justice  
M. Sadok Chaâbane  
Ministre de la Justice  
Ministère de la Justice  
Boulevard Bab Benat  
Tunis, Tunisia  
**Faxes: +216 1 568 106**

**Telexes: 13000 maet tn (via Ministère de l'Intérieur)**  
**Telegrams: Ministre de la Justice Chaâbane, Tunis, Tunisie**  
**Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency**

2) Minister of the Interior

M. Mohamed Jegham  
Ministre de l'Intérieur  
Ministère de l'Intérieur  
Av. Habib Bourguiba  
Tunis, Tunisia  
**Faxes: +216 1 340888**  
**Telegrams: Ministre de l'Interieur, Tunis, Tunisia**  
**Telexes: 13662 sdap tn**  
**Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

Tunisian Human Rights League  
Me Taoufik Bouderbala, Président  
**Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme, LTDH**  
21 Rue Imam el Bakri  
1002 TUNIS Belvedere  
Tunisia  
**Faxes: +216 1 801 599**

*Institut arabe des droits de l'homme (IADH)*  
10, Rue Iben Messaoud  
El Menzah  
Tunisia  
**Faxes: +216 1 750 911**

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 13 June 1996.