

EXTERNAL

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Fear of torture / Legal concern

21 November 1996

TUNISIA Radhia AOUIDIDI (f), aged 26

Abdelaziz AOUIDIDI, aged 28, her brother

Radhia Aouididi has reportedly been held incommunicado since her arrest on 9 November 1996, exceeding the maximum 10-day limit to such detention under Tunisian law. Her brother Abdelaziz Aouididi has also since been arrested. Both their whereabouts are unknown, heightening fears for their safety.

Radhia Aouididi was reportedly arrested at Tunis-Carthage airport as she was about to board a plane to France to be reunited with her fiancé who has refugee status there. She was apparently found to be in possession of a false passport. She is said to have been denied requests for a passport and her identity card had been confiscated. She has not been heard of since her arrest.

One of her brothers, Abdelaziz Aouididi, was reportedly arrested at the main police station in Sfax (south of Tunisia) on or around 14 November when he went to find out where Radhia was being held, and what her legal status was. He, too, has not been heard of since.

Radhia had previously been arrested and detained for a day or two, during which time she was interrogated about the political activities with the unauthorized Islamist party *al-Nahda* of a second brother, Nouredine Aouididi, an asylum-seeker in Europe.

Amnesty International is concerned for the well-being of Radhia and Abdelaziz Aouididi in view of the continuing practice by the Tunisian authorities of holding suspected political opposition activists and their relatives in illegally prolonged incommunicado detention, during which time many are ill-treated and tortured.

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

- expressing concern that Radhia Aouididi, arrested on 9 November, is being held in prolonged incommunicado detention in breach of both Tunisian law and international standards, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which Tunisia is a state party;
- expressing concern that Radhia and her brother, Abdelaziz Aouididi, arrested in Sfax on or around 14 November, are at risk of torture and ill-treatment as long as they are held incommunicado, and stating that they should be released unless they are charged with recognizable criminal offences;
- calling for them to be given prompt access to their family and a lawyer, and to medical care if necessary;
- seeking information about their whereabouts and legal status.

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

Fax: +216 1 340888

Telegrams: Ministre de l'Interieur, Tunis, Tunisia

Telex: 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 1 336 338

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 31 December 1996.