

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 332/92 Incommunicado Detention/Fear of Torture

23 October 1992

TUNISIA: Abderrazak HAMZAoui, student

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of a Tunisian student who is being held in incommunicado detention. Abderrazak Hamzaoui has not been seen since his arrest on 19 September 1992 and the organization fears he is at risk of torture.

Abderrazak Hamzaoui is a second year student in computer programming at the University of Tunis. He was arrested on 19 September 1992 in the Ben Arous district of Tunis near the hostel where he was staying. His brother, Mongi Hamzaoui, a milk salesman, who was arrested on 16 September 1992, has been charged with supporting the illegal Islamic party Hizb al-Nahda. The arrest of Abderrazak Hamzaoui is also thought to be related to government repression of suspected supporters of al-Nahda. According to reports, Abderrazak Hamzaoui was taken to the police station in Kasserine near his home but later transferred to the Ministry of the Interior where he is still apparently held. There are also reports that he has suffered ill-treatment in detention.

Members of the family went to the Kasserine Police Station and the Ministry of the Interior on many occasions; on one occasion an official informed them that Abderrazak Hamzaoui's file was at the Ministry but no information was given as to his whereabouts. Amnesty International is concerned that Abderrazak Hamzaoui has had no access to his family or legal counsel since his arrest on 19 September 1992 and may be at risk of torture. Amnesty International is also concerned for his health as Abderrazak Hamzaoui is said to have suffered osteomyelitis as a child, leaving him with weakened bones in his left leg.

Amnesty International raised the case of Abderrazak Hamzaoui with the Tunisian Ministry of the Interior on 9 October 1992, but no information on his whereabouts has yet been received.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Over 9,000 supporters of Hizb al-Nahda have been arrested and detained over the last two years. Many of these have been held in prolonged incommunicado detention. Arrest dates have been systematically falsified in order to make it appear that the 10-day maximum limit of garde à vue detention laid down by Tunisian law is being adhered to. Hundreds have been tortured, many reportedly while being held in incommunicado detention within the Ministry of the Interior on Habib Bourguiba Avenue.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail

letters either in Arabic, French, English or in your own language:

- expressing concern that Abderrazak Hamzaoui is being held in incommunicado detention for longer than the 10-day maximum limit;
- urging that his family be allowed immediate access to him and that he receives all necessary medical care;
- urging that Abderrazak Hamzaoui be immediately released unless he is charged with a recognizable offence;

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- urging the Tunisian authorities to take all necessary measures to ensure that no-one is detained in prolonged **garde à vue** detention, as this is the time when detainees are more at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

APPEALS TO:

1. Ministre de l'Intérieur

M. Abdallah Kallel

Ministère de l'Intérieur

Avenue Habib Bourguiba

Tunis, Tunisie

Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Tunis, Tunisia

Telexes: 13662 sdap tn

Salutation: Excellence

2. Ministre de la Justice

M. Sadok Chaabane

Ministère de la Justice

Boulevard Bab Benat

Tunis, Tunisie

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Tunis, Tunisia

Faxes: 216 1 568 106

Salutation: Excellence

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

M. Iadh Ouederni

Conseiller Présidentiel chargé des droits de l'homme

Palais Présidentiel

Carthage/Tunis

Tunisie

Fax: 216 1 731 009

PLEASE ALSO SEND COPIES OF SOME OF YOUR APPEALS, FOR INFORMATION, TO:

Human Rights Organization

Comité supérieur pour les droits

de l'homme et les libertés fondamentales

44 rue de Pologne

Bab Saadoun

Tunis

Tunisie

Fax: 216 1 574638

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 4 December 1992.