

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

**AI Index: MDE 28/04/94**

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**2 March 1994**

*PLEASE DRAW TO THE ATTENTION OF THE REFUGEE COORDINATOR IN YOUR SECTION*

**Further information on EXTRA 10/94 (MDE 28/03/94, 16 February 1994) - Fear of Refoulement**

**ALGERIA:**  
Zine El Abidine ATTIA  
Idriss NOUIOUI  
Kaddour NAGHMOUCHI  
Mahjoubi SOLTAN  
Nassereddine KHELISI  
Barhoumi BOUMENJEL  
Bechir Aboud ABDELJAOUAD

**and new name**                      **Jebari BOUJEMAA**

**(all Tunisian nationals)**

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The eight people named above, now including Jebari Boujemaa, face imminent *refoulement* and may already have been handed over to the authorities in Tunisia, where they face torture, ill-treatment and imprisonment after unfair trial.

All eight are recognized as refugees in need of protection by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Algiers. They are all either members or sympathizers of the unauthorized Islamist movement *Al-Nahda*, Renaissance, whose supporters suffer systematic persecution, arrest and torture in Tunisia.

Unlike the other seven, who were all arrested around 9 February, Jebari Boujemaa was arrested on 25 February in Tebessa, near the Algeria-Tunisia border and is said to be presently held in Algiers with the seven others; he had previously been arrested by the Algerian police at the beginning of 1993 and left at the Tunisian border, from where he managed to return to Algeria.

Amnesty International has received several conflicting reports about the whereabouts and legal status of the eight Tunisians. The most recent, unconfirmed, reports lead the organization to fear that all eight may already have been handed over to the Tunisian authorities. Despite repeated requests, UNHCR have still not been able to gain access to them, and so have not been able to confirm their whereabouts.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

There are indications that several countries in the Middle East including Algeria and Tunisia are establishing mutual security agreements and increasingly cooperating with each other in their bid to restrict the freedom of people they consider to be members or sympathizers of Islamist opposition groups. Some of these agreements apparently allow for the exchange of security offenders. Amnesty International is concerned that in some cases this has led to expulsions of refugees in violation of the international principle of non-refoulement.

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

- asking the Algerian authorities to inform you urgently of the whereabouts and legal status of the eight Tunisians;
- urging that on no account should Zine El Abidine ATTIA, Idriss NOUIOUI, Kaddour NAGHMOUCHI, Mahjoubi SOLTAN, Nassereddine KHELISI, Barhoumi BOUMENJEL, Bechir Aboud ABDELJAOUAD, Jebari BOUJEMAA, who are all recognized as refugees by the UNHCR office in Algiers, be forcibly returned to Tunisia, where they face torture, ill-treatment and imprisonment after unfair trial;
- stressing that such a forcible return (*refoulement*) would be in violation of international standards, including the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), to which Algeria is a state party;
- urging the Algerian authorities to allow UNHCR, their lawyer and families immediate and full access to the individuals concerned.

**APPEALS TO:**

Salutation for all: *Excellence/Your Excellency*

1) State President

M. Lamine ZEROUAL

Président de l'Etat, Présidence de la République

El Mouradia, Algèr, Algérie

**Faxs: +213 2 60 96 18**

**Téléx: 66044/66088**

**Télégrams: Président de l'Etat Zeroual, Algèr, Algérie**

2) Minister of the Interior

M. Salim SIFADI

Ministère de l'Intérieur, Ministère de l'Intérieur

Algèr, Algérie

**Faxs: +213 2 61 88 02 or +213 2 64 57 93**

**Téléx: 66341**

**Télégrams: Ministre Saadi, Ministère de l'Intérieur, Algèr, Algérie**

3) Minister for Foreign Affairs

M. Mohamed Salah DEMBRI

Ministère des Affaires étrangères

Ministère des Affaires étrangères

6 rue 16n-Batran

El-Mouradia, Algèr, Algérie

**Faxs: +213 2 60 51 61**

**Téléx: 66241/66178/66243**

**Télégrams: Ministre Dembri, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Algèr, Algérie**

**PLEASE SEND COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO** the following Tunisian minister: if the individuals in question have already been handed-over, it might provide some form of protection for them if the Tunisian authorities are aware of international concern about them.

Minister of the Interior

M. Abdallah KALLAL

Ministère de l'Intérieur, Ministère de l'Intérieur

Avenue Habib Bourguiba, Tunis, Tunisie

**Faxs: +216 1 340 888**

and to diplomatic representatives of ALGERIA accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 2 April 1994.