

UA 70/00

Arrests / Prosecution / Police intimidation / Fear for

---

**ALGERIA** Relatives of the "disappeared" - Fatima Kime (f), Fatima Ben Mousa (f),  
Rahmouna Bourahla (f), Faouzia Guene (f) and Badra Leban (f)

---

Amnesty International is very concerned that a peaceful demonstration of mothers, wives, sisters, daughters and other relatives of the "disappeared", which is held weekly in Oran, Western Algeria, was violently broken up by police on 22 March 2000 with the arrests of at least 15 women.

As the demonstrators were standing in front of the building of the district administration (*Wilaya*) they were surrounded by police who hit them with clubs and kicked them. All the women had been released by the next morning except for Fatima Kime (whose brother "disappeared" from Relizane) who is still detained at the central police station in Oran, Western Algeria.

Two mothers of the "disappeared", Fatima Ben Mousa and Rahmouna Bourahla and two wives, Faouzia Guene and Badra Leban, who were detained until the morning of 23 March, were made to sign police statements and told to report back to the police station in Oran on 25 March. It is expected that they and Fatima Kime will be charged with participating in an unauthorized demonstration.

One of the mothers, Setti Bouteiba, was apparently kicked in the legs. Her son, Miloud Bouteiba, a 40-year-old post and telecommunication inspector who was married with two children, "disappeared" after being arrested at his workplace in July 1994.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Since 1993, around 4,000 people have "disappeared" in Algeria after being arrested. Their families have been searching for information on their whereabouts ever since at police stations, army barracks, prisons, morgues and cemeteries. They have also petitioned the judicial authorities and appealed to the government, the parliament and the President of the Republic. Despite government promises in 1998 to carry out investigations into "disappearances", no concrete action has yet been taken.

For years most families of the "disappeared" have been too afraid to protest publicly. Since August 1998, however, hundreds of relatives, especially mothers, began to hold regular demonstrations in the capital, Algiers, and other cities, demanding news of their missing loved ones. On some occasions, notably in December 1998 and January and March 1999 in Algiers, and more recently in Relizane (near Oran), the security forces have violently broken up the demonstrations and ill-treated women taking part.

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

- expressing concern that a peaceful demonstration of mothers, wives, sisters, daughters and other relatives of the "disappeared" was violently broken up by police on 22 March 2000 in Oran and that at least 15 female relatives were arrested, and calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Fatima Kime;
- expressing concern at the continuing detention of Fatima Kime and the fact that she and four others: Fatima Ben Mousa, Rahmouna Bourahla, Faouzia Guene and Badra Leban, are at risk of being prosecuted for their part in a peaceful demonstration;

- expressing concern that police ill-treated Setti Bouteiba and other demonstrators and threatened them with arrest and prosecution if they took part in future demonstrations;
- urging the authorities to ensure that the security forces do not arrest, ill-treat or threaten the families of the "disappeared" for peacefully demonstrating.

**APPEALS TO:**

Interior Minister

M. Yazid ZERHOUNI  
Ministre de l'Intérieur  
Ministère de l'Intérieur et  
des Collectivités Locales  
18 rue Docteur Saâdane  
Alger  
Algérie

**Telegrams:Ministre l'Intérieur, Alger, Algérie**

**Faxes: + 213 2 73 61 06**

**Salutation:Monsieur le Ministre / Your excellency**

Minister of Justice

M. Ahmed OUYAHIA  
Ministre de la Justice  
Ministère de la Justice  
8 Place Bir Hakem  
El Biar  
Alger  
Algérie

**Telegrams:Ministre Justice, Alger, Algérie**

**Faxes: + 213 2 92 21 95**

**Salutation:Monsieur le Ministre / Your excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

State Human Rights Institution reporting to the President

M. Kamel REZZAG-BARA  
President  
Observatoire National des Droits de l'Homme (ONDH)  
Palais du Peuple  
1 Av. Franklin Roosevelt  
Alger  
Algérie

**Faxes: + 213 2 239005 / 239037**

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 5 May 2000.