

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 29/04/97

UA 175/97 Prisoners of conscience / Health concern /  
Ill-treatment

13 June 1997

MOROCCO Mostafa FAJLI, Ahmed El-AMALI, Bennacer LIMORI, Mohamed ERRAHDAOUI, Mahjoub El-MANOUIARI, Boushmain ABDELHAFID, Mohamed JABRANI, Ahmed OUBANMOUSSA, Hamid KHILI, Mohamed BENAYAD, Fouad BEKKANE, Kacem EL-GHAZI, Abdelkarim LARKO, Oubiz TAIBI, Aziz BAHJAOUI, Abdelkrim DARDAR, Mostafa MEZDI, Mohamed KADOURI  
And more than 100 others

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More than 120 supporters of the *Parti de l'Avant-garde Démocratique Socialiste* (PADS), Socialist Democratic Vanguard Parti, were arrested between 3 and 10 June 1997 in various towns in Morocco, following the call by PADS to boycott the forthcoming municipal elections. Eighteen of them, named above, have been on hunger-strike since 4 June, in protest at their imprisonment.

Some of those arrested have been released without charge, but the majority remain detained on charges of inciting voters to abstain from voting. All were charged under Article 90 of the electoral code, which provides for up to three months' imprisonment, and some were also charged under other articles which provide for heavier sentences. At least 30 of them have been tried and sentenced to up to five months' imprisonment, including the above-named 18 people. Two of them, Ahmed Oubanmoussa and Aziz Bahjaoui, are currently in hospital because of their deteriorating health.

Amongst those detained awaiting trial is Bouchra Laskri, mother of a seven-month-old baby arrested in Rabat on 7 June, and Brahim Znider, who was arrested in Rabat on 7 June and who was reportedly ill-treated in police custody; his lawyers have lodged a complaint and requested an investigation into the allegations of ill-treatment.

Amnesty International considers all those detained or imprisoned for having called for the boycott of the elections without having used or advocated violence as prisoners of conscience and calls for their immediate and unconditional release.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Arrests and imprisonment of prisoners of conscience have been widespread during election campaigns in previous years in Morocco. Most of those arrested were usually released without charge, but many others were tried and sentenced to prison terms.

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

- expressing concern at the arrest of more of 120 people for their peaceful call to boycott the elections;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all those detained solely for the expression of their political ideas without having used or advocated violence;
- urging that a prompt, independent and impartial investigation be carried out into allegations that Brahim Znider was ill-treated during police custody;
- urging that those on hunger-strike be given immediate medical care if necessary.

**APPEALS TO:**

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**Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Rabat, Morocco**  
**Salutation: Excellence / Your Excellency**

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**COPIES TO:**

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and to diplomatic representatives of MOROCCO accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 July 1997.