

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 30/02/96

11 January 1996

Further information on UA 271/95 (MDE 30/30/95, 8 December 1995) - Fear of torture / Legal concern and new concerns: Possible prisoners of conscience / Torture / Health concern

TUNISIABachir ABID)
Ali JALLOULI) students
Abdel Moumens BELANES)

Amnesty International has received reports that Bachir Abid and Ali Jallouli, arrested on 28 November 1995, and Abdel Moumens Belanes, arrested on 30 November, were tortured and ill-treated while held in illegally prolonged incommunicado detention in the Ministry of the Interior for over two weeks.

During this time, the three students were reportedly suspended in contorted positions with their arms and legs behind tied their backs and beaten on various parts of their bodies; they were suspended by their feet from a pulley whilst their heads were plunged into a bucket of water mixed with bleach; and they were given electric shocks on sensitive parts of their bodies. In addition, Abdel Moumens Belanes was reportedly subjected to sleep and food deprivation for seven days, and the other two for five days. During the sleep deprivation, they were reportedly tied on a chair and forced to stay awake by means of a needle which was stuck into their necks each time their heads would fall from tiredness.

They were subsequently brought before an examining magistrate (*juge d'instruction*) on 16 December and charged with several offences, including belonging to an unauthorized association (thought to be the unauthorized Union of Communist Youth), setting up a criminal association with the aim of attacking individuals and property, distributing leaflets containing false information, and insulting the justice system, public order and the public administration.

The three students are now being detained in the 9 Avril Prison of Tunis. Their defence lawyers and lawyers from the Tunisian Human Rights League and from the Tunisian Bar Association, who have visited them since they were transferred to prison, have confirmed that they bore marks of torture. To date they have neither been given a medical examination, despite repeated requests by their lawyers, nor have they been allowed access to the necessary medical care. No judicial investigation is known to have been ordered or carried out into the allegations of torture.

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

- calling for a prompt, full and independent investigation into the allegations that Bachir Abid, Ali Jallouli and Abdel Moumens Belanes were tortured at the Tunisian Ministry of the Interior in early December 1995, and for anyone found responsible for their torture to be brought to justice;
- urging that they be granted prompt access to an independent medical examination, and to the necessary medical care;
- expressing concern that they may be detained as prisoners of conscience, and urging that they be immediately and unconditionally released if this is the case.

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

Faxes: +216 1 340888

Telexes: 13662 sdap tn

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency

3) Minister of Foreign Affairs

M. Habib Ben Yahia
Ministre des Affaires étrangères
Ministère des Affaires étrangères
Place du Gouvernement
La Kasbah, Tunis, Tunisia

Telexes: 14470 mafta tn, 14471 mafta tn, 14472 mafta tn

Telegrams: Ministre des Affaires étrangères Ben Yahia, Tunis, Tunisie

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 1 801 599

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 25 February 1996.