

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of Torture in Prolonged  
Incommunicado Detention

25 March 1991

TUNISIA: Sadiq Shourou  
Mohammed Moncef Al Triqi  
Abdelaziz Al Buzouadi  
Mohammed Ben Salem

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Amnesty International is concerned that four Tunisians, members or sympathizers of a non-recognized Islamic Group, are being held incommunicado in prolonged garde à vue detention and may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Sadiq Shourou, a lecturer in the Faculty of Medicine at Tunis University, was arrested on 23 February 1991. He is said to be a sympathizer of the non-recognized Islamic group Hizb al-Nahda (Renaissance) and had previously been detained for three months and subsequently released without charge in 1987.

Mohammed Moncef Al Triqi, Head of the Tunis section of the Association for the Protection of Human Rights and Public Liberties and a member of Hizb al-Nahda, was arrested on 17 February 1991.

Abdelaziz Al Buzouadi, a former teacher working as journalist for Al-Fajr, the weekly newspaper of Hizb al-Nahda, was arrested on 23 February 1991. The newspaper Al-Fajr was ordered to close by the Tunisian Government on 8 February 1991.

Mohammed Ben Salem, a former lecturer in the Faculty of Agriculture in Tunis University - now working as an engineer - and a member of the legislative council of Hizb al-Nahda, was arrested on 24 February 1991.

The above named have now been held incommunicado in garde à vue detention well beyond the maximum 10-day period permitted under Tunisian law. Moreover, Tunisian law states that garde à vue detention must be renewed by the Procureur de la République (State Prosecutor) after four days; there is no evidence that this condition was complied with in any of these cases. Their families and lawyers have sought information of their whereabouts and legal status from the police and the Ministry of Interior but have not succeeded in obtaining any information.

Amnesty International is concerned that these people may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment, especially in light of the numerous reports of torture and ill-treatment in garde à vue detention received over the past few months. Since September 1990 several hundred supporters and suspected sympathizers of Hizb al-Nahda have been arrested, many of whom, especially those held in garde à vue detention beyond the 10-day legal period, have alleged that they were tortured or ill-treated in police custody.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters in French or Arabic if possible:**

- expressing concern that Ali Asbai, Mohammed Moncef Al Triqi, Sadiq Shourou Abdelaziz Al Buzouadi and Mohammed Ben Salem have been held in prolonged garde à vue incommunicado detention, and that they are at risk of torture or ill-treatment;
- asking the reason for their arrest and details of any charge or pending trial procedures against them;
- urging that if they are not charged with a recognizably criminal offence and promptly brought to trial, they should be released;
- urging the government to reveal their whereabouts and to allow them prompt access to legal counsel, to their families, and to medical care if necessary.

**APPEALS TO:**

Son Excellence  
Président Zine El Abidine Ben Ali  
Président de la République  
Palais Présidentiel  
Carthage  
Tunis, Tunisia  
**Telegrams: President Ben Ali, Tunis, Tunisia**  
**Telexes: 14900 PRPSA TN; 12163 PPSD TN**  
**Faxes: +216 1 74 4721**

M. Abdelhamid Escheikh  
Ministre de l'Intérieur  
Ministère de l'Intérieur  
Place du Gouvernement  
Tunis, Tunisia  
**Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Tunis, Tunisia**

**Telexes: 13662 sdap TN**

M. Chedli Neffati  
Ministre de la Justice  
Ministère de la Justice  
Boulevard Bab Benat  
Tunis, Tunisia  
**Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Tunis, Tunisia**  
**Telexes: (via Ministre de l'Extérieur) 13000 MAET TN**  
**Faxes: + 216 1 56 8106**

**COPIES TO:** Diplomatic representatives of Tunisia in your country.

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

Ligue Tunisienne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme  
1, rue Canada  
Tunis, Tunisia

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat or your section Office if sending appeals after 6 May 1991.