

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 30/24/97

6 May 1997

Further information on UA 119/97 (MDE 30/22/97, 28 April 1997) - "Disappearance" / Fear of Torture / Prisoners of conscience (corrected title)

TUNISIA Ahmed BERRAMILA
Rachid ENNAJAR
Monji SOUAB
Jilani HAMMAMI - trade unionists

Amnesty International has received information that the four trade unionists named above were brought before the *juge d'instruction* (investigating judge) in Tunis on 5 May 1997 and charged with possession and distribution of leaflets, insulting an official body and spreading false information liable to disturb public order. They are scheduled to appear before the investigating judge again on 7 May.

The four men were among seven trade unionists (the other three have been released) arrested at the end of April 1997 in connection with public appeals issued earlier in the month protesting at increasing restrictions imposed by the authorities on political and civil liberties, freedom of expression and information and trade union rights in Tunisia and at the impact on Tunisian citizens of the country's deteriorating economic situation.

All four men were held in secret detention from the time of their arrest until their transferral to 9 Avril prison in Tunis on 5 May 1997. Their families were unable to obtain any information regarding their whereabouts during that period. Furthermore, three of the detainees - Rachid Ennajar, Monji Souab and Jilani Hammami - were held incommunicado for between 12 and 15 days. This is in breach of Tunisian law which limits incommunicado detention to a maximum of 10 days.

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

- reiterating that the four men should be immediately and unconditionally released as prisoners of conscience, held solely on account of the peaceful expression of their opinions;
- expressing serious concern that three of the detainees were held in illegally prolonged incommunicado detention;
- urging that all four detainees be allowed continuing access to their families, lawyers and to independent medical assistance if necessary.

APPEALS TO:

1) Minister of Justice
M. Abdallah Kallel
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, Tunis, Tunisie

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency

2) Minister of the Interior

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M. Mohamed Ben Rejeb
Ministre de l'Intérieur
Ministère de l'Intérieur
Av. Habib Bourguiba
Tunis , Tunisia
Fax: +216 1 340888
Telegrams: Ministre de l'Interieur, Tunis, Tunisia
Telex: 13662 sdap tn
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Tunisian Human Rights League
Me Taoufik Bouderbala, Président
Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme, LTDH
7 Rue Pierre Curie
TUNIS, Tunisia
Faxes: + 216 1 336 338

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 June 1997.