

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 30/30/97

27 May 1997

Further information on UA 142/97 (MDE 30/28/97, 14 May 1997) - Prisoner of conscience / Fear of ill-treatment and new concern: Torture / Medical concern

TUNISIA Abdel Moumen BELANES, student

Amnesty International is extremely concerned at information it has just received that Abdel Moumen Belanes was tortured for several hours on 30 April 1997, and again on 2 May, by 12 prison guards. Methods of torture reportedly used against him included being beaten with truncheons all over his body, including the soles of his feet, and having guards standing on his chest.

Abdel Moumen Belanes, who has been imprisoned as a prisoner of conscience since 6 March 1997, is currently held in Nadhor Prison. His lawyers reported seeing visible signs of torture on his body during a visit on 24 May. These included bruises on his knees and legs, and a large, 2cm-thick lump on his right arm. They further stated that he is reported to be in bad health as a result of his poor conditions of detention. He was reportedly detained in a punishment cell until 22 May, during which time he was only fed a little bread and water every 24 hours and was not permitted to wash. On 22 May he was moved to a cell which he shares with 14 other prisoners. He is the only one in the cell who has no bed and has to sleep on the floor.

The visit by his lawyers on 24 May was the first they have been permitted to undertake since 26 April. However, on attempting to visit him again on 26 May they were prevented from doing so. His family were refused permission to visit him on 27 May. They have been unable to visit him since 29 April.

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

- calling for a full, independent and impartial inquiry into the reported torture on 30 April and 2 May 1997 of Abdel Moumen Belanes, for the results to be made public, and for the perpetrators to be brought to justice;
- calling for Abdel Moumen Belanes' immediate and unconditional release as a prisoner of conscience;
- seeking assurances that he will not be subjected to further torture or ill-treatment during his imprisonment;
- expressing concern at his poor conditions of detention, and urging that he have immediate access to any medical care he may need, as well as to his family and lawyers;
- expressing concern that Abdel Moumen Belanes was again denied a visit by his lawyers on 26 May, and that his family have been unable to visit him since 29 April.

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

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 15 July 1997.