

TUNISIA Radhia Nasraoui and her children Nadia Hammami, Oussaima Hammami and Sara Hammami

Amnesty International is very concerned for the safety of human rights lawyer Radhia Nasraoui and her three daughters Nadia (16), Oussaima (10) and Sara (6 weeks) who are being harassed, intimidated and threatened by the security forces and being kept under constant surveillance.

Radhia Nasraoui has faced harassment and intimidation by the security forces for many years in connection with her work.

Although the levels of surveillance have varied they have increased dramatically in the last three weeks with more than a dozen members of the security forces now involved in watching her and her daughters.

Around 10 days ago her daughter Nadia narrowly avoided being hit by a man on a motorbike, of the type used by the security forces, in a children's play area. In March 1999 she was followed to and from school by two members of the security forces walking closely in front of and behind her. When she got home they made obscene gestures at her. Phone lines at both Radhia's office and at her mother's home have been cut.

Members of the security forces in cars have twice, in April and then in May 1998, tried to run Radhia Nasraoui down. On one occasion they attempted to abduct her daughter Oussaima.

In February 1998, Radhia Nasraoui's office was ransacked (see UA 48/98, MDE 30/04/98, 13 February 1998 and follow ups) after a month of intense harassment and surveillance. Her home and office had both been broken into or vandalized before.

In March 1998, Radhia was charged together with students and alleged members of the *Parti communiste des ouvriers tunisiens* (PCOT), Tunisian Workers' Communist Party, whom she was representing. The examining magistrate granted her bail but forbade her to leave Tunis. Her husband, Hama Hammami, a spokesperson for PCOT who was also charged in the case, has been in hiding since February 1998. On 15 July 1999, Radhia Nasraoui was given a six-month suspended prison sentence by the *Tribunal de première instance*, Court of First Instance, in Tunis. Hama Hammami was sentenced *in absentia* to nine years and three months' imprisonment.

The latest period of intense surveillance appears to be connected to an interview Hama Hammami recently gave to *Radio France Internationale* in which he talks about the case. It also appears to have led to raids on the houses of alleged PCOT members.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Harassment, intimidation and surveillance of human rights defenders and their relatives are commonly used in Tunisia in an attempt to silence them (see Amnesty International report: Human rights defenders at risk, MDE 30/16/99, 26 May 1999). Some members of the *Ligue tunisienne des droits de l'homme* (LTDH), Tunisian Human Rights League, are regularly followed by members of the security forces wearing plain clothes. Their employers have also been approached by

members of the security forces and questioned. Human rights lawyer Anouar Kousri, who lives in Bizerte (north of Tunisia), and some of his relatives are under constant surveillance. In February 1999, the 11-year-old daughter of human rights defender and prisoner of conscience Khemais Ksila was hit by a car, allegedly driven by members of the security forces, in front of her school.

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

- expressing concern that Radhia Nasraoui and her family are being severely harassed and intimidated by the security forces on account of her human rights work and professional duties;
- recalling the Tunisian authorities to respect the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which they ratified on 26 February 1990;
- asking the authorities to ensure that human rights defenders and their relatives are protected and that they are allowed to carry out their human rights activities;
- asking the authorities to ensure that a prompt and full investigation is carried out into the attack against Nadia Hammami and that those responsible are brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Justice

M. Abdallah Kallel

Ministre de la Justice

Ministère de la Justice

31 Boulevard Bab Benat

1006 Tunis, Tunisie

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Tunis, Tunisie

Faxes: + 216 1 568 106

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency

Minister of the Interior

M. Ali Chaouch

Ministre de l'Intérieur

Ministère de l'Intérieur

Avenue Habib Bourguiba

1001 Tunis, Tunisie

Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Tunis, Tunisie

Faxes: + 216 1 340 881

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, Tunisie

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 14 September 1999.