

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 30/34/96

10 October 1996

Further information (2) on UA 208/96 ((MDE 30/23/96, 22 August 1996; MDE 30/24/96, 27 August) - Prisoner of Conscience

TUNISIA Bourhan GASMI, aged 29, student

The appeal trial *in absentia* of Bourhan Gasmi started in Gabès on 30 September 1996 and on 7 October the court announced that his sentence of two years and two months' imprisonment - on charges of belonging to and collecting funds for an unauthorized organization - was reduced to two years. The charge of collecting funds for an unauthorized organization was dropped.

In 1992, Bourhan Gasmi was tried *in absentia* in Gabès and sentenced to two years and two months' imprisonment for belonging to the unauthorized *Parti Communiste des Ouvriers Tunisiens* (PCOT), Tunisian Communist Workers' Party and collecting funds on behalf of the organization, but he was not arrested at the time.

Bourhan Gasmi was arrested along with fellow-students Mohamed Tahar Brahmi and Lotfi Hammami on 17 August 1996 during a wave of arrests of students close to the PCOT. They were released on bail on 25 August. All three had been tortured and ill-treated whilst being held in incommunicado detention for a week.

Bourhan Gasmi is at present in hiding.

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

- expressing your concern that Bourhan Gasmi has been sentenced to two years' imprisonment for his peacefully-held political beliefs;
- reiterating your concern at the allegations that Bourhan Gasmi, Mohamed Tahar Brahmi, Lotfi Hammami and others students - refer to follow-up MDE 30/24/96, 27 August - were tortured and ill-treated during incommunicado detention, and urging that a full, independent and impartial investigation be carried out into the allegations, that the findings be made public, and that anyone found responsible be brought to justice.

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

2

Tunis, TUNISIA

Faxes: +216 1 340 888

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

21 Rue Imam el Bakri

1002 TUNIS Belvedere

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 27 November 1996.