

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: MDE 29/03/94

Distr: UA/SC

UA 187/94

trial

Detention of possible prisoners of conscience/fear of unfair

12 May 1994

MOROCCO: Mohamed Hrach Errass
Mbarek Tausse
Ahmed Kikche
Ali Aken
Said Jaafar
Omar Darouiche
Omar Ochna

Amnesty International is concerned that seven members of a human rights organization and trade union detained after peaceful demonstrations may be prisoners of conscience and that their trial may fall short of international fair trial standards.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Mohamed Hrach Errass, Mbarek Tausse, Ahmed Kikche, Ali Aken, Said Jaafar, Omar Darouiche and Omar Ochna were arrested in Errachidia after peaceful Labour-day demonstrations on 1 May. They were charged with inciting actions threatening public order and internal state security, and of chanting slogans attacking the principles of the Constitution. At the demonstration they chanted slogans calling for the recognition of the Berber language as an official language in Morocco and distributed copies of a letter sent to the Prime Minister by the Association for Berber Culture. The demonstration had been authorized by the authorities and the slogans they chanted are the same as they chanted in the same demonstration last year.

At the first hearing in Errachidia on 5 May Ahmed Kikche, Said Jaafar, Omar Darouiche and Omar Ochna were granted bail by the court but the prosecution appealed and they remained detained. The trial is now set for 17 May.

The Articles of the Moroccan legal provisions under which they have been charged include articles from the laws on Associations and on Public Meetings, and the Press Code. These laws have repeatedly been used in Morocco to detain prisoners of conscience, and Amnesty International is concerned that Mohamed Hrach Errass, Mbarek Tausse, Ahmed Kikche, Ali Aken, Said Jaafar, Omar Darouiche and Omar Ochna may be prisoners of conscience detained solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression and association, and that their trial may fall short of international standards for fair trial.

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

- expressing concern that Mohamed Hrach Errass, Mbarek Tausse, Ahmed Kikche, Ali Aken, Said Jaafar, Omar Darouiche and Omar Ochna, imprisoned after peaceful demonstrations, may be prisoners of conscience detained solely for exercising their right to freedom of expression and association: a right guaranteed by international standards including the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Morocco is a state party;
- urging the Moroccan authorities to ensure that the trial of Mohamed Hrach Errass, Mbarek Tausse, Ahmed Kikche, Ali Aken, Said Jaafar, Omar Darouiche and Omar Ochna is carried out in full accordance with international standards for fair trial;

APPEALS TO

King Hassan II
Palais Royal
Rabat, Maroc
Telegrams: King Hassan II, Rabat, Maroc
telex: 31744 or 32908
Salutation: Sire / Your Majesty

M. Omar Azziman
Ministre Délégué chargé des Droits de l'Homme
Bureau du Premier Ministre
Palais Royal
Rabat, Maroc
Telegrams: M. Azziman, Palais Royal, Rabat, Maroc
Faxes: 212 7 77 68 37
Telex: 361 61
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Mohamed Idrissi Alami Machichi
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice
Palais de la Manounia
Rabat, Maroc
Ministre Machichi, Palais Manounia, Rabat, Maroc
Telex:36888
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

M. Mohamed Mikou, Secrétaire général
Conseil consultatif des droits de l'homme
BP 1341
24 Place des Chouhada
Rabat, Maroc

Association Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme
14 rue Calcutta
BP 1740
Rabat, Maroc
Fax: 212 7 707 871

Organisation Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme
24, Avenue de France
Quartier Agdal
Rabat, Maroc
Fax: 212 7 774615

and to diplomatic representatives of Morocco accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 June 1994.