

EXTERNAL

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MEDICAL CONCERN

©HASSAN EL HASNI ALAOU
MOROCCO

Amnesty International is seeking information from the Moroccan authorities about the medical care available to Hassan el Hasni Alaoui, a political prisoner in his early thirties who is serving a 20-year sentence. He has a right inguinal hernia and suffers from occasional luxation of the right shoulder which is said to be the result of trauma sustained during his interrogation in 1985. Amnesty International believes that he may have been arrested solely for the non-violent expression of his political and religious beliefs and is currently investigating his case.

BACKGROUND

Hassan el Hasni Alaoui was a student of literature at the time of his arrest and was a member of the *Mouvement de la jeunesse islamique marocaine* (MJIM), the Moroccan Islamic Youth Movement. He was arrested at his home in Casablanca on 5 July 1985 and first held incommunicado for a period of seven months in Derb Moulay Cherif, a secret detention centre in Casablanca frequently used to keep political prisoners in pre-trial detention. Torture is routinely practised and Hassan Alaoui is reported to have been subjected to torture during this period.

His arrest took place against a background of disturbances and political trials in the early 1980s. A wave of arrests took place in the summer of 1985, particularly in Mohammedia, 30 km north-east of Casablanca, after supporters of Islamic groups put up banners and distributed leaflets, some of which attacked the King for daring to call himself 'Commander of the Faithful'. In January 1984 widespread demonstrations were held following educational changes and the announcement of price rises in staple foodstuffs, leading to the arrest of hundreds of students and suspected political opponents of the government. Members of Islamic groups detained around the same time were brought to trial with those who had been detained during the summer.

Hassan el Hasni Alaoui was brought to trial in June-July 1984 together with 50 other individuals charged with plotting against the monarchy. All were members of various Islamic groups and a further 20 were tried *in absentia*. 15 were sentenced to death (seven *in absentia*) and the remainder received sentences ranging from life imprisonment to 10 years. Hassan el Hasni Alaoui appealed against his 20-year sentence, but this was rejected in 1985.

He is reported to suffer from a right inguinal hernia and from periodic spontaneous luxation of the right shoulder due to trauma suffered while under interrogation. Surgery was recommended for the hernia in 1987, but has not been performed. He is held in Safi prison and, in late 1990, was referred to a doctor in Kenitra prison, where facilities are better than in Safi prison. It is reported that although this doctor recommended further examination, he was not permitted to stay in Kenitra and was returned to Safi without further attention.

Amnesty International is urging the Moroccan authorities to ensure that Hassan el Hasni Alaoui is provided with any medical care and treatment he requires while he remains in detention.