

15 December 2000

Further information on UA 297/00 (MDE 30/22/00, 26 September 2000) and follow-ups (MDE 30/23/00, 2 October 2000; MDE 30/24/00, 12 October 2000; MDE 30/25/00, 19 October 2000; MDE 30/26/00, 30 October 2000, MDE 30/28/00, 29 November 2000) - Health concern / Ill-treatment

## TUNISIA

Abdallah Drissa  
Bouraoui Makhlouf  
Bachir Abid  
Lotfi Amdouni (ended his hunger strike)  
More than 70 others

New names: Rached Jaidane  
Youssef Nouri  
Khelil Gharsallaoui  
Halim Kasem  
Daniel Zerrouk  
Ouasfi Zoughlami

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Rached Jaidane, who has been on hunger strike since 8 November, lost consciousness and was taken to hospital on 2 December. There is no news about his current state of health and his family has not been allowed to visit him.

Rached Jaidane is one of scores of prisoners on hunger strike in Mahdia Prison. Among them are Bouraoui Makhlouf, Khelil Gharsallaoui and Ouasfi Zoughlami, all Islamist activists serving prison sentences on charges of links with unauthorized Islamist groups. Other Islamist activists on hunger strike include Daniel Zerrouk and Halim Kasem, both held in El Houareb Prison.

Youssef Nouri, on hunger strike in the 9 Avril Prison in Tunis, was severely beaten by prison guards in the third week of November since when his family has not been allowed to visit. His family received his clothes stained with blood and he is reported to be in a very poor condition.

Abdallah Drissa is continuing his hunger strike, which began on 11 September, and is reported to be in a critical physical condition. He is diabetic and has recently developed a skin condition which continues to worsen due to lack of treatment. Like many of the other prisoners on hunger strike, he has been denied visits by his family for weeks at a time.

Bachir Abid, who has been on hunger strike since 18 October, is also reported to be in a critical physical condition and has not had access to adequate medical care. His lawyers also continue to be refused permission to visit him. He is serving an 18-months prison sentence on charges of links with an unauthorized party, *Parti communiste des ouvriers tunisiens* (PCOT), Tunisian Workers' Communist Party.

Lotfi Amdouni has now stopped his hunger strike.

Those on hunger strike are protesting at their detention and the extremely poor detention conditions or the length of judicial proceedings against them.

On 14 December the European Parliament passed an urgent resolution expressing concern about the situation of the prisoners on hunger strikes in Tunisia and about other aspects of the deteriorating human rights situation in the country, including the increased targeting of human rights defenders.

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

- expressing concern for the health of prisoners currently on hunger strike, seeking assurances that they are kept under medical surveillance, given appropriate medical care and granted prompt and regular access to their families and lawyers;
- expressing concern for the health of prisoners who have ended their hunger strike, urging that they are immediately given the necessary medical care, and that they are granted prompt and regular access to their families and lawyers.

**APPEALS TO:**

Minister of the Interior

M. Abdallah KALLEL

Ministre de l'Intérieur

Ministère de l'Intérieur

Avenue Habib Bourguiba

1001 Tunis, Tunisia

**Telegram: Ministre Interieur, Tunis, Tunisia**

**Fax: + 216 1 340 888**

**E-mail: mint@ministeres.tn**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Your Excellency**

Presidential Councillor for Human Rights

M. Dali JAZI

Conseiller Spécial auprès du Président de la République,

chargé des droits de l'homme

Palais Présidentiel

Tunis

Tunisia

**Fax: + 216 1 571314**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Conseiller / Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

M. Afif Hendaoui

Ministre Délégué chargé des Droits de l'Homme

Bureau du Premier Ministre

Place du Gouvernement

La Kasbah

1006 Tunis

Tunisia

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 26 January 2001.