

# URGENT ACTION

## MAN RETURNED TO MOROCCO FROM SPAIN

**Ali Aarrass, a dual Belgian-Moroccan national, was extradited from Spain to Morocco on 15 December. Neither Ali Aarrass's lawyers nor his relatives were informed by the authorities of his extradition and only learnt about it through the media. They do not know where in Morocco he was sent to.**

On 19 November 2010, Spain's Council of Ministers gave final approval to the extradition of **Ali Aarrass** to Morocco. However, interim measures were issued by the UN Human Rights Committee on 26 November 2010, requesting Spain not to extradite Ali Aarrass while his case was considered.

Ali Aarrass had been detained in Spain since 1 April 2008, when he was arrested in the Spanish city of Melilla, on the basis of international arrest warrants issued by Morocco on 28 March 2008. The Spanish national criminal court (*Audiencia Nacional*) authorized the extradition of Ali Aarrass to Morocco on 21 November 2008. The decision was confirmed on appeal on 23 January 2009, on the assurance from the Moroccan government that Ali Aarrass would not be sentenced to the death penalty or life imprisonment without parole.

Ali Aarrass was wanted in Morocco on terrorism-related charges and is accused of belonging to a terrorist network headed by Abdelkader Belliraj. Thirty-five individuals were arrested in early 2008 in connection with the "Belliraj Cell" and a number of them have reportedly been tortured by members of the Directorate for the Surveillance of the Territory (Direction de la surveillance du territoire, DST), an intelligence body, during their incommunicado detention at the Témara detention centre. They were convicted on appeal in July 2010 in a trial marred by procedural irregularities and unexamined claims of torture and other ill-treatment.

**No further action is needed at the moment from the UA network. We will continue to monitor the situation and take further action if required. Many thanks to all who took action.**

This is the second update of UA 106/09. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR41/004/2010/en>

Further information on UA: 106/09 Index: EUR 41/005/2010 Issue Date: 16 December 2010

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