

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST RELEASED, SEVEN REMAIN IMPRISONED

A court in Tamanrasset, Algeria, acquitted and released activist Abdelali Ghellam on 19 April. Seven other men remain imprisoned for taking part in a peaceful protest last December. They are prisoners of conscience.

The Tamanrasset Court of Appeals acquitted and released activist **Abdelali Ghellam** on 19 April, a month and a half after he was arrested. On the evening of his release, he thanked human rights defenders, and in particular Amnesty International, for their support. He had been sentenced to one year in prison for inciting others to take part in an “unarmed gathering” and to “obstruct traffic” on a public road through Facebook posts about a peaceful protest in the southern Algerian city in late December 2015. The protest was initiated by a local resident demanding a meeting with Tamanrasset’s governor (*wali*) to contest an eviction order.

Seven other men, including activist **Dahmane Kerami**, as well as other peaceful activists, and relatives and neighbours of the man facing eviction remain imprisoned. They were arrested during the same protest in late December 2015 and were all sentenced on 6 January to one year in prison and fines for taking part in an “unarmed gathering” and “offending public bodies”. Their conviction was upheld on appeal. They are prisoners of conscience, imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

Please write immediately in Arabic, French or your own language:

- Urging the Algerian authorities to release Dahmane Kerami and his six co-defendants immediately and unconditionally, as they are prisoners of conscience, jailed solely for the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and assembly;
- Calling on them to amend legislation that criminalizes the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, including Article 97 of the Penal Code prohibiting “unarmed gatherings”, Article 114 bis on “offending the President”, and Article 146 on “offending public bodies”;
- Urging them to stop arresting, prosecuting and imprisoning those exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 1 JUNE 2016 TO:

President

Abdelaziz Bouteflika
 Presidency of the Republic
 El Mouradia, Algiers
 Algeria
 Fax: +213 21 6915 95 / +213 21 6096 18
 Email: president@el-mouradia.dz

Salutation: Your Excellency

Justice Minister

Tayeb Louh
 Ministry of Justice
 8 Place Bir Hakem
 16030 El Biar, Algiers
 Algeria
 Fax: +213 21 9217 01
 Email: contact@mjustice.dz
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

President, National human rights institution
 M. Mustapha Farouk Ksentini
 Commission nationale consultative de promotion et de protection des droits de l’Homme
 Palais du Peuple, Avenue Franklin Roosevelt,
 Algiers, Algeria
 Fax: +213 21 2399 58
 Email: contact@cncppdh-algerie.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 54/16. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE28/3846/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The seven prisoners are held in Tamanrasset prison and include members of the National Committee for the Defence of the Rights of the Unemployed, and a local activist group called Ma Frat (colloquial Algerian Arabic meaning “It has not been solved”).

See also the public statement, *Algeria: end relentless targeting of government critics*, published on 4 December 2015: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde28/2951/2015/en/>.

Names: Dahmane Kerami and his six co-defendants

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 54/16 Index: MDE 28/3874/2016 Issue Date: 20 April 2016