

**ALGERIA**Said ZAOUÏ, aged 70

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A 70-year-old former member of a banned Islamist organization has reportedly been tortured while in security force detention. Amnesty International believes that he is at risk of further torture and fears for his safety.

Said Zaoui, a former member of the banned *Front islamique du salut* (FIS), Islamic Salvation Front, was arrested on 7 February in Dellys, a coastal town some 100 kilometres east of the capital, Algiers. He was taken to a nearby security force base, where he remains in detention. Other detainees, who were arrested at the same time and later released, have reported that he has been tortured.

Said Zaoui was arrested with about 20 other people following a recent bomb attack against a military unit in the area. All but Said Zaoui were released without charge after two or three days. The security forces apparently used torture to extract information from the detainees, all of whom were reportedly beaten. Some also had electricity applied to their bodies, others were made to swallow dirty water through a cloth placed in their mouths.

In a separate incident on 7 February, a man was extrajudicially executed in what is thought to have been act of reprisal for the same bomb attack. Karim Bentouati, who was born in 1973, was shot dead by the security forces outside his house in the Ladjena district of Dellys.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Reports of torture and ill-treatment by the Algerian security forces have substantially decreased in the last two years. However, dozens of people arrested during recent months on suspicion of being linked to armed groups have been subjected to torture or ill-treatment in custody. There is a continued lack of investigation into these human rights violations, and impunity is afforded to those allegedly responsible.

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

- expressing grave concern that Said Zaoui and about 20 other men arrested on 7 February have reportedly been tortured;
- seeking assurances that Said Zaoui will not be subjected to further torture or ill-treatment;
- urging that he is provided with any necessary medical attention;
- asking that he is not held in incommunicado detention beyond the 12 day legal limit, and that if held for longer, he be given access to his family and lawyers;
- urging that the torture allegations are investigated, and that those responsible are brought to justice;
- calling for an investigation to be carried out into the extrajudicial execution of Karim Bentouati, and for those responsible to be brought to justice.

**APPEALS TO:**

Interior Minister  
M. Yazid ZERHOUNI  
Ministre de l'Intérieur  
Ministère de l'Intérieur et  
des Collectivités Locales

2

18 rue Docteur Saâdane

Alger

Algérie

**Telegrams:Ministre l'Intérieur, Alger, Algérie**

**Faxes: + 213 21 73 61 06**

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

Minister of Justice

M. Ahmed OUYAHIA

Ministre de la Justice

Ministère de la Justice

8 Place Bir Hakem

El Biar

Alger

Algérie

**Telegrams:Ministre Justice, Alger, Algérie**

**Faxes: + 213 21 92 21 95**

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

**COPIES TO:**

State Human Rights Institution reporting to the President

M. Kamel REZZAG-BARA

President

Observatoire National des Droits de l'Homme (ONDH)

Palais du Peuple

1 Av. Franklin Roosevelt

Alger

Algérie

**Faxes: + 213 21 239005**

and to diplomatic representatives of Algeria accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 March 2001.