

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 29/01/96

EXTRA 09/96

Health concern / Prisoners of conscience 24 January 1996

MOROCCO Abdelkader SFERI, aged 34

Ahmed HAOU

Abdelkader Sferi, who has been on an unlimited hunger-strike since 1 January 1996 is now in Avicennes Hospital in Rabat and his condition is serious and deteriorating. Amnesty International is deeply concerned that the life and health of this prisoner of conscience, who should be immediately and unconditionally released, are at risk.

Another prisoner of conscience, Ahmed Haou, and three other political prisoners sentenced in unfair trials are also on a limited hunger-strike in Oukacha prison in Casablanca.

Amnesty International is calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Abdelkader Sferi, Ahmed Haou and all other prisoners of conscience, and for the prompt retrial according to international standards for fair trial of the other political prisoners.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Abdelkader Sferi, a student arrested in 1983, was tried in 1984 with a group of 71 supporters (20 of them *in absentia*) of the illegal organization *al-Shabiba al-Islamiya* (Islamic Youth), including Ahmed Haou. They were arrested after putting up anti-monarchist posters, distributing leaflets and taking part in demonstrations, and were convicted of plotting to overthrow the monarchy; their convictions were based on confessions signed under torture during months of secret detention. Abdelkader Sferi, Ahmed Haou and 11 others (seven *in absentia*) were sentenced to death (their death sentences were commuted to life imprisonment in 1994); the others received prison sentences varying from four to 20 years. Those from this group who remained in prison were released in an amnesty in July 1994, except Abdelkader Sferi, Ahmed Haou, and two others.

In the past few years, and especially after the amnesty in 1994 in which more than 350 political prisoners and prisoners of conscience were released, Abdelkader Sferi, Ahmed Haou and other political prisoners have undertaken numerous hunger-strikes, usually limited for set periods of time.

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

- expressing deep concern at the deteriorating health condition of prisoner of conscience Abdelkader Sferi, who has been on an unlimited hunger-strike since 1 January 1996;
- calling for his immediate and unconditional release;
- also calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Ahmed Haou.

APPEALS TO:

MINISTER OF JUSTICE
Abderrahmane Amalou
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice
Palais de la Manounia
Rabat, Maroc

Faxes: (+212 7) 76 99 95; (+212 7) 77 68 37

Telegrams: Ministre de la Justice, Rabat, Morocco
Salutation: Excellence / Your Excellency

PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS:
M Abdellatif Filali
Premier Ministre et Ministre des Affaires Etrangères
Bureau du Premier Ministre
Palais Royal, Rabat, Maroc
Faxes: (+212 7) 76 99 95; (+212 7) 77 68 37
Telegrams: Premier Ministre, Rabat, Morocco
Salutation: Excellence / Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

HUMAN RIGHTS MINISTER:
M. Mohamed Ziyane
Ministre Délégué auprès
du Premier Ministre chargé
des Droits de l'Homme
47 Avenue Ibn Sina
Agdal, Rabat, Maroc
Fax: (+212 7) 67 19 67, or 67 20 18

and to diplomatic representatives of MOROCCO accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 February 1996.