

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 69/94 Health Concern / Torture

22 February 1994

TUNISIA Hamma HAMMAMI, member of the unauthorized *Parti communiste des ouvriers tunisiens* (PCOT), Tunisian Workers' Communist Party

Amnesty International is concerned about the health of Hamma Hammami who was arrested on 14 February 1994, subsequently tortured and ill-treated, and is currently being denied adequate medical care whilst held in pre-trial detention.

Hamma Hammami was tortured in the first two days after his arrest, both at Sousse Police Station and at the Ministry of the Interior in Tunis where he was subsequently taken. He was severely beaten around the head and body, sexually humiliated, and made to lie on the ground whilst policemen put a gun to his head, threatened to kill him, and stood on his neck causing near-asphyxiation.

Following this torture, Hamma Hammami fainted repeatedly and fell unconscious for a period of several hours. He is still suffering from headaches and dizziness and is in urgent need of proper examination to establish the extent of his head injuries. Repeated requests made by his family and lawyers for a medical examination following his alleged torture have still not been met.

He is entitled to such an examination both under Tunisian law and international standards, such as the UN Convention Against Torture.

In addition, Hamma Hammami suffers from kidney stones and a heart condition for which he needs to take regular medicine. His family have not yet been allowed to bring him the necessary medicine. There is also concern that he is being held in overcrowded and insanitary conditions in Sousse Prison, and is receiving inadequate food (daily rations reportedly consist solely of one bowl of soup with bread).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At the time of his arrest, Hamma Hammami was in hiding after being sentenced *in absentia* in December 1992 to 4 years and 9 months' imprisonment for attending unauthorized meetings and distributing leaflets of the PCOT. His new trial is expected to take place in the Sousse Court of First Instance on 23 February 1994, on charges of grievous bodily harm (*coups et blessures*), refusal to comply with police orders (*refus d'obtempérer*) and falsification of identity papers.

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

- expressing concern that Hamma Hammami is being denied adequate medical care, and urging that he be given immediate medical treatment as necessary;
- deploring the torture and ill-treatment that he suffered after his arrest on 14 February 1994;
- expressing concern that despite repeated requests made by his lawyers and family he has not yet received a medical examination, as he is entitled to under Tunisian law and international standards;

APPEALS TO: Salutations for all: Excellence / Your Excellency

1) President

M. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali

Président de la République
 Palais Présidentiel
 Tunis/Carthage, Tunisie
Faxes: +216 1 744 721
Telexes: 14900 prpsa tn 12163 ppsd tn
Telegrams: Président Ben Ali, Tunis, Tunisie

2) Minister of Justice
 M. Sadok Chaâbane
 Ministre de la Justice
 Ministère de la Justice
 Boulevard Bab Benat
 Tunis, Tunisie
Faxes: +216 1 568 106 or +216 1 567 070
Telexes: 13000 maet tn (via Ministère de l'Intérieur)
Telegrams: Ministre de la Justice Chaâbane, Tunis, Tunisie

3) Minister of the Interior
 M. Abdallah Kallel
 Ministre de l'Intérieur
 Ministère de l'Intérieur
 Avenue Habib Bourguiba
 Tunis, Tunisie
Faxes: +216 1 340 888
Telexes: 13662 sdap tn
Telegrams: Ministre de l'Intérieur Kallel, Tunis, Tunisie

4) Minister of Foreign Affairs
 M. Habib Ben Yahia
 Ministre des Affaires étrangères
 Ministère des Affaires étrangères
 Place du Gouvernement
 La Kasbah
 Tunis, Tunisie
Faxes: +216 1 791005
Telexes: 14470 mafta tn, 14471 mafta tn, 14472 mafta tn
Telegrams: Ministre des Affaires étrangères Ben Yahia, Tunis, Tunisie

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

M. Iadh Ouederni
Conseiller présidentiel pour les Droits de l'Homme
 Attaché à la Présidence de la République
 Palais Présidentiel
 Tunis/Carthage, Tunisie
faxes: +216 1 731 009 or +216 1 742 513

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 5 April 1994.