

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 30/27/91  
Distrib: PG/SC

To: Medical professionals  
From: Medical Office / Research Department - Middle East  
Date: 12 December 1991

*MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION*

**@Mohcen Ben Abdallah Ben Taieb ZEGHDOUDI  
TUNISIA**

**Keywords**

Theme: garde à vue detention/medical care

**Summary**

Mohcen Zeghdoudi, a 23-year-old student with a history of chronic depression, is being held in incommunicado detention. He was arrested in August 1991 and held incommunicado for over 80 days in breach of Tunisian law. He was released on 15 November 1991, but re-arrested on 27 November and is again being held in incommunicado detention. AI is concerned that he is at risk of torture and that he may be at serious risk of ill-health. The organization is urging his release unless he is to be charged with a recognizable crime.

**Recommended Actions**

Letters from medical professionals, preferably written in Arabic or French, otherwise your own language, should be sent to the addresses below:

- enquiring about the exact location of Mohcen Zeghdoudi and expressing concern that he was re-arrested on 27 November following an earlier 80-day period of incommunicado detention;
- asking about his health and well-being, and whether he is receiving his medication;
- expressing extreme concern that he is again being held in incommunicado detention and at the prolonged length of time he has been thus held in breach of Tunisian law;
- urging that he be released unless he is to be charged with a recognizable crime

**APPEALS TO:**

Son Excellence  
 Président Zine El Abidine Ben Ali  
 Président de la République  
 Palais Présidentiel  
 Carthage  
 Tunis, Tunisia  
**Telegrams: President Ben Ali, Tunis, Tunisia**  
**Telexes: 14900 prpsa tn; 12163 ppsd tn**  
**Faxes: + 216 1 74 4721**

M. Abdallah Kallel  
 Ministre de l'Interieur  
 Ministère de l'Interieur  
 Place du Gouvernement  
 Tunis, Tunisia  
**Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Tunis, Tunisia**  
**Telexes: 13662 sdap tn**  
**Faxes: +216 1 34 0888**

M. Abderrahim Zouari  
 Ministre de la Justice  
 Ministère de la Justice  
 Boulevard Bab Benat  
 Tunis, Tunisia  
**Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Tunis, Tunisia**

M. Hamed Karoui  
 Premier Ministre  
 Bureau du Premier Ministre  
 Place du Gouvernement  
 Tunis, Tunisia  
**Telegrams: Premier Ministre, Tunis, Tunisia**  
**Telexes: 14530 pmcab tn**  
**Faxes: + 216 1 56 2378**

M. Habib Ben Yahia  
 Ministre des Affaires Etrangères  
 Ministère des Affaires Etrangères  
 Place du Gouvernement  
 La Kasbah  
 Tunis, Tunisia  
**Telegrams: Ministre Affaires Etrangères, Tunis, Tunisia**  
**Telexes: 14470/1/2 mafta tn**

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Tunisia in your country

**PLEASE ALSO SEND COPIES OF SOME OF YOUR APPEALS, FOR INFORMATION, TO:**

Ligue Tunisienne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme  
 1, rue Canada  
 Tunis, Tunisia

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.**

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***MEDICAL CONCERN*****Mohcen Ben Abdallah Ben Taieb Zeghdoudi  
Tunisia**

A 23-year-old chronically-depressed student was re-arrested in November 1991, less than two weeks after his release from over 80 days in incommunicado (*garde à vue*) detention, where he was reportedly ill-treated. There are fears that he may not be receiving his normal medication. Mohcen Ben Abdallah Ben Taieb Zeghdoudi, a third year sociology student, was arrested on 27 November 1991 from the University in Tunis. He suffers from chronic depression and has been treated for this since 1983. For the past eight years he has been prescribed Laroxyl L25 (amitriptyline), Anafranil (clomipramine), Largactil (chlorpromazine), and Tranxènes (clorazepate).

The family and lawyer of Mohcen Zeghdoudi have made inquiries about him to the police, prison and public prosecutor; they have also contacted the President of the Republic, the Minister of the Interior, the Presidential counsellor for human rights and the president of the *Commission supérieure des droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales*, but have been unable to obtain information on his whereabouts. AI is concerned that Mohcen Zeghdoudi is again being held in *garde à vue* detention beyond the maximum 10-day period allowed by Tunisian law and may be at risk of torture (as most cases of torture occur during *garde à vue* detention).

Mohcen Zeghdoudi was arrested earlier on 27 August 1991 and held incommunicado for over 80 days. He was released on 15 November 1991 without charge. During this first period of detention police officers reportedly searched the Zeghdoudi house without a warrant looking for information about Mohcen's brother who is in hiding, and threatened the family with arrest if they hid anything. His family had also sought information on his whereabouts from the police station and the Ministry of the Interior on this occasion, but had been unable to obtain any information.

Amnesty International is seeking information on the reason for Mohcen Zeghdoudi's arrest and is concerned by his prolonged incommunicado detention without access to family or legal counsel. There is considerable concern for his safety and well-being.