

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 30/33/99

8 September 1999

Further information on UA 194/99 (MDE 30/31/99, 3 August 1999) - Fear for safety / Harassment and intimidation

**TUNISIA Radhia Nasraoui, human rights lawyer, and her children Nadia Hammami, Oussaima Hammami and Sara Hammami
Other members of her family**

Police have reportedly started to harass and intimidate Radhia Nasraoui's extended family, searching their homes without warrants, threatening them with violence or arrest, and interrogating them about her and her husband.

Early in the morning of 7 September 1999 around 50 police officers came to the farmhouse where three of Radhia Nasraoui's uncles live with their wives and children. The family let them in after they threatened to break the door down and tie them up.

The police threatened the family with farm implements, broke down doors and searched the house from top to bottom. Although they mentioned no names, it seems very likely that they were looking for Radhia Nasraoui's husband, Hamma Hammami, who is in hiding.

When one of the uncles asked the police for a search warrant, they told him, "We don't need warrants; we are police officers," and threatened to arrest him. They ordered him to go to the local police station, where he was interrogated about Radhia Nasraoui and Hamma Hammami.

About two weeks previously, one of the uncles, Mohamed, had had his car confiscated, and was interrogated about Radhia and Hamma at the police station while he was trying to retrieve his car. At around the same time, another uncle, Naceur, was arrested at around midnight with his wife and two children, aged six and two, in their car outside the farm. They were interrogated for over three hours before they were released.

Hamma Hammami's family have also been harassed and intimidated. Police recently went to the house of his cousin, Lotfi, and other relatives, and interrogated them about Hamma's whereabouts, kicking and slapping some of them.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Radhia Nasraoui has been continually harassed over several years because of her work as a human rights lawyer. In March 1998, she was charged, along with students and alleged members of the *Parti communiste des ouvriers tunisiens* (PCOT), Tunisian Workers' Communist Party, whom she was representing, with offences including membership of a terrorist group, inciting rebellion and defamation of the authorities. She was given a six-month suspended prison sentence. Hamma Hammami, who was tried in the same case, was sentenced *in absentia* to nine years and three months' imprisonment.

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

- expressing concern that Radhia Nasraoui and her daughters are being severely harassed and intimidated by the security forces because of her human rights work and professional duties;

- expressing concern that Radhia Nasraoui's and Hama Hammami's extended families are now being harassed, intimidated and assaulted by members of the Tunisian police force;
- asking the authorities to ensure that a prompt and full investigation is carried out into the attacks on members of Hama Hammami's family, and into the unauthorized entry, with threats of violence, into Radhia Nasraoui's uncles' house, and that those responsible are brought to justice;
- asking the authorities to ensure that human rights defenders and their relatives are protected and that they are allowed to carry out their human rights activities.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Justice

M. Abdallah Kallel
Ministère de la Justice
31 Boulevard Bab Benat
1006 Tunis
Tunisia

Telegrams:Ministre Justice, Tunis, Tunisia

Fax:+ 216 1 568 106

Telex: 13000 maet tn (via Ministère de l'Intérieur)

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre/Your Excellency

Minister of the Interior

M. Ali Chaouch
Ministère de l'Intérieur
Avenue Habib Bourguiba
1001 Tunis
Tunisia

Telegrams:Ministre Interieur, Tunis, Tunisia

Fax: + 216 1 340 888

Telex: 13662 sdap tn

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre/Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Tunisian Human Rights League

Me Toufik Bouderbala
Président Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme
LTDH
7 Rue Pierre Curie
Tunis
Tunisia

Faxes:+ 216 1 336 338

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 20 October 1999.