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Tunisia: Sentence against blogger upheld in new blow to free speech

The upholding of a sentence against a blogger jailed for “insulting Islam” is yet another blow to freedom of expression in Tunisia, Amnesty International said.

Jabeur Mejri's conviction was today upheld by the Court of Cassation.

The blogger was sentenced in March 2012 to seven and a half years in prison and a fine of 1,200 Tunisian Dinars – US\$757 - after a court in Mahdia, eastern Tunisia, deemed posts he made online insulting to Islam and Muslims.

“There’s no reason for the Tunisian authorities to keep Jabeur Mejri imprisoned,” said Philip Luther, Amnesty International's Middle East and North Africa Director.

“He must be immediately and unconditionally released and the authorities must urgently reform articles of the Penal Code that restrict freedom of expression.”