

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Public Statement

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### **Algeria: Human rights lawyers on trial**

On the eve of the start of the trial of two human rights lawyers in an Algiers court on 17 January 2007, Amnesty International reiterates its concern that they face imprisonment because of their advocacy work and calls on the Algerian authorities to ensure that the proceedings meet international standards for fair trial.

Amnesty International believes that the court case being brought against Hassiba Boumerdesi and Amine Sidhoum is an attempt to intimidate them and deter them from carrying out their human rights work.

Hassiba Boumerdesi and Amine Sidhoum were charged in September 2006 with violating laws governing the organization and security of prisons, based on allegations by the prison authorities that they had passed items to their clients in detention without authorization. The charges carry prison terms of up to five years' imprisonment. According to the law regulating the legal profession, the authorities may also request that lawyers who are under investigation for an offence are suspended from practising law.

For further information, please refer to the Amnesty International public statement *Algeria: Human rights lawyers threatened with imprisonment on trumped-up charges* (AI Index: MDE 28/018/2006), 23 September 2006.