

URGENT ACTION

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE OF MAN IN MOROCCO

Ahmed Mahmoud Haddi, a Sahrawi man aged about 32, was abducted on 28 October by people suspected of being members of Moroccan security forces. He may have been subjected to an enforced disappearance, and is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Ahmed Mahmoud Haddi and a male friend, **El-Houssine El-Mahmoudi**, were abducted from a street in the city of Rabat on 28 October. Several days earlier, they had travelled together from Laayoune in Western Sahara to the cities of Casablanca and Rabat, reportedly on business. A group of men in civilian clothes forced the two into separate vehicles and took them to an unknown location. El-Houssine El-Mahmoudi, who was released on 3 November, believes that he was detained by members of the Directorate for the Surveillance of the Territory, Morocco's internal intelligence service, in an unofficial place of detention. He suspects he was held in the Témara centre, near Rabat. Amnesty International has received reports that people, particularly individuals suspected of terrorism-related activities, have been tortured there. El-Houssine El-Mahmoudi said that he was questioned several times on the purpose of their travel from Laayoune and Ahmed Mahmoud Haddi's activities as an advocate for the self-determination of Western Sahara. El-Houssine El-Mahmoudi was released without being formally charged; but had his car, a number of documents pertaining to his business, vehicle ownership papers and money confiscated. When El-Houssine El-Mahmoudi asked a man interrogating him what had happened to Ahmed Mahmoud Haddi, he was told that he will remain detained while he is being investigated.

Members of Ahmed Mahmoud Haddi's family approached local authorities in Laayoune, and visited police stations in Rabat and a prison in Casablanca to ask about his whereabouts. A lawyer helping them also approached the General Prosecution in Rabat. The authorities denied holding him.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Arabic, French or your own language:

- √ Expressing concern that Ahmed Mahmoud Haddi has apparently been held in secret and incommunicado detention since 28 October in circumstances amounting to an enforced disappearance;
- √ Urging the Moroccan authorities to immediately disclose the whereabouts of Ahmed Mahmoud Haddi and ensure that he has access to his family, legal assistance and any medical care he might require;
- √ Calling on the authorities to ensure that he is protected from torture or other ill-treatment in compliance to Morocco's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- √ Insisting that the authorities release him immediately or else charge him with a recognizably criminal offence;
- √ If he is to be charged, calling for him to be brought immediately before the judicial authorities and given access to a lawyer of his choice, in compliance with national and international human rights law;
- √ Calling on the Moroccan authorities to return confiscated items belonging to El-Houssine El-Mahmoudi.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 05 JANUARY 2010 TO:

Minister of Justice

His Excellency Abdelwahed Radi
Ministry of Justice
Place Mamounia, Rabat
Maroc/Morocco

Fax: +212 537 72 37 10 or +212 537 73 07 72 or +212 537 73 47 25

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Interior

His Excellency Chakib Benmoussa
Ministry of Interior
Quartier Administratif, Rabat
Maroc/Morocco

Fax: +212 537762056

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

President of the Advisory Board of Human Rights

Ahmed Herzenni
Place Ach-chouhada,
B.P. 1341, 10000 Rabat,
Maroc/Morocco

Fax: +212 537 726856

Email: ccdhdh@ccdhdh.org.m

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of Morocco accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ahmed Mahmoud Haddi, an advocate for the self-determination of Western Sahara, was released from prison in June 2009 after completing a three-year prison sentence on charges of assaulting and disobeying a police officer during his arrest. He was arrested on 17 June 2006 at a police checkpoint at the entrance to Laayoune, along with his brother and two prominent Sahrawi human rights defenders.

Moroccan authorities show little tolerance for expressing views in favour of the self-determination of Western Sahara, and Sahrawi activists face increased harassment, intimidation and even prosecution.

On 2 November 2009 the Moroccan official news agency announced the disbanding of a criminal gang engaged in drug trafficking and car theft. According to the news agency's report, the gang included a member of the Polisario Front, which calls for the self-determination of Western Sahara and runs a self-proclaimed government-in-exile in refugee camps in south-western Algeria. Some human rights defenders in Western Sahara suspect that this allegation about the Polisario Front member refers to Ahmed Mahmoud Haddi.

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