

PUBLIC

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UA 157/07 Forcible return/Fear of torture and other ill-treatment

TUNISIA/USA **Abdellah Ben Omar al Hajji (m), Tunisian national, aged 51**
Lutfi Ben Swei Lagha (m), Tunisian national, aged 38

On 17 June, the USA transferred two Tunisian nationals, Abdellah Ben Omar al Hajji and Lutfi Ben Swei Lagha, from Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, to the custody of the Tunisian government. They had spent around five years in US custody.

Both men were transported on board a US military plane and handed to the Tunisian authorities early on 18 June. During the flight, they were blindfolded and were forced to wear sound-proof headphones. The Tunisian authorities have acknowledged that they have both men in their custody.

Lutfi Ben Swei Lagha, who is reportedly wanted by the Tunisia authorities for membership of a terrorist organization, was said to have been presented before an examining magistrate few days after his transfer to Tunisia.

Abdellah al-Hajji's lawyer was only able to see him on 25 June. Abdellah al-Hajji told him that he was beaten and threatened with having his wife and children arrested and tortured in front of him. He is now in solitary confinement in Mornaguia Prison, around 70km from Tunis. His appeal against the 20-year sentence which was handed down during his absence in the early 1990s for alleged membership of the Islamist Front in Tunisia will be considered by the Tunis military court on 26 September.

Amnesty international will continue to monitor both men's situations.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Thank you to all who sent appeals.