

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## PUBLIC STATEMENT

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### **Libya: Prisoner of Conscience Idriss Boufayed Released**

Amnesty International welcomes the release by the Libyan authorities of Libyan Prisoner of Conscience Idriss Boufayed on 8 October 2008, but stresses that it must be unconditional and that he should be allowed to travel abroad for medical treatment if he wishes.

Idriss Boufayed was arrested on 16 February 2007, the day before a peaceful demonstration he had attempted to organize was scheduled to take place. He was detained incommunicado until 24 June 2007, when he was brought before a court and charged with "attempting to overthrow the political system" and "communication with enemy powers." On 10 June 2008, Idriss Boufayed was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment by the State Security Court in a hearing which did not meet standards for fair trial.

Idriss Boufayed was released on humanitarian grounds after being diagnosed with lung cancer in May 2008. There have been concerns that he was not receiving appropriate medical treatment and that he would need to travel abroad for treatment which is not available in Libya.

The organization remains seriously concerned that Abdelrahman Al Gatewy, who has not been heard of since February 2008 remains disappeared.

Amnesty International is also concerned about the continued detention of the ten other men involved in organizing the demonstration since it considers them to be prisoners of conscience who have been sentenced solely for the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and assembly. Jamal el-Haji was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment, while Ahmed Youssef al-Obaidi and the brothers al-Mahdi Saleh Hmeed, Faraj Saleh Hmeed, and al-Sadeq Saleh Hmeed were sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. Farid Mohammed al-Zwai, Alaa al-Drissi and Bashir Qasem al-Hares were sentenced to six years imprisonment each, Ali Saleh Hmeed to six and a half years and al-Sadiq Qeshoot to seven years imprisonment.