

URGENT ACTION

ALI AARRASS SUSPENDS HUNGER STRIKE

Ali Aarrass suspended his hunger strike on 4 November as his health was failing. He is still fighting for justice.

Ali Aarrass suspended his hunger strike on 4 November, after 72 days. His family, who visited him in Salé II prison, near Rabat, told Amnesty International that he had lost a lot of weight, was in pain and very weak, and no longer able to retain even small quantities of water. They said he feared his life was in danger. He is still urging the Moroccan and Belgian authorities to meet the demands which prompted him to go on hunger strike, and to protect him from further ill-treatment, as he said he had been beaten and verbally abused on 29 September.

Please write immediately in Arabic, French or your own language:

- Calling on the Moroccan authorities to ensure that Ali Aarrass is protected from further ill-treatment and treated humanely;
- Calling on them to order a prompt, independent and impartial investigation into the ill-treatment he has said he suffered on 29 September, and hold those responsible to account;
- Urging them to implement the decision of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) calling on them to release Ali Aarrass immediately and give him adequate compensation.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 18 DECEMBER 2015 TO:

Minister of Justice and Liberties
Mustafa Ramid
Ministry of Justice and Liberties
Place El Mamounia – BP 1015
Rabat
Morocco
Fax: + 212 5 37 73 47 25
Salutation: Your Excellency

Director of General Administration for
Prison Administration and Reinsertion
Mohamed Saleh Tamek
Angle avenue Arar et rue El-Jouz
Hay El Riyad, Rabat
Morocco
Fax: + 212 5 37 71 26 19
Salutation: Dear Sir

And copies to:

Ambassador of Belgium to Morocco
S.E.M. Frank Carruet
4-6, Avenue Mohammed El Fassi
Tour Hassan
10100 Rabat
Morocco
Fax: +212 5 37 76 70 03

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 219/15. Further information:
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde29/2773/2015/en/>

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

ALI AARRASS SUSPENDS HUNGER STRIKE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ali Aarrass is urging the Moroccan authorities to release him, two years after the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) called on the authorities to release him immediately. The WGAD concluded that he had been convicted solely on the basis of “confessions” extracted under torture. His hunger strike is also a protest against significant delays in the judicial authorities’ investigation into his torture allegations, as well as the failure of the Court of Cassation, Morocco’s supreme judicial authority, to reach a decision in his case, nearly three years after he appealed against his conviction.

Ali Aarrass has been detained in Morocco since 14 December 2010, when he was forcibly returned from Spain. He has said he was held incommunicado and tortured for 12 days in a secret detention centre run by the General Directorate for the Surveillance of the Territory (*Direction générale de la surveillance du territoire*, DST) in Témara. He was previously the subject of UA 198/13 (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde29/009/2013/en/>). He is serving a 12-year prison sentence handed down after he was convicted of participating in and procuring arms for a criminal group known as the “Belliraj network”. The court had relied on a “confession” which he said had been obtained through torture.

Morocco’s judicial authorities announced on 21 May 2014 that they were conducting an investigation into his torture allegations, two days after the UN Committee against Torture found Morocco in breach of the Convention against Torture in relation to Ali Aarrass. Ali Aarrass underwent a medical examination in November 2014 over several days, without an independent monitor present, as proposed by his lawyers and, separately, Amnesty International. His lawyers have not yet received the report of the medical examination.

The UN Human Rights Committee decided in July 2014 that Spain had breached its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by extraditing Ali Aarrass to Morocco, in spite of warnings by the UN and Amnesty International. It asked Spain to award Ali Aarrass adequate compensation and take all possible measures to work with the Moroccan authorities to ensure he was well treated in Morocco. In 2015, the Committee against Torture also expressed concern about the extradition and called on Spain to investigate his torture allegations.

The Brussels Court of Appeal instructed the Belgian authorities in September 2014 to provide Ali Aarrass with consular assistance. The Belgian authorities have appealed before the Court of Cassation.

Ali Aarrass has said that on 29 September several men came to search his cell, without identifying themselves, though some were wearing green uniforms and others civilian clothes. They threw him to the floor, causing him severe pain, and kicked him and shouted at him when he asked to see a doctor. He said they had filmed the search, which lasted over two hours, and destroyed his personal belongings, off camera. His family believe this was in retaliation for having reported being tortured in 2010, as well as an international public campaign calling for his release.

Name: Ali Aarrass

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 219/15 Index: MDE 29/2828/2015 Issue Date: 6 November 2015