

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

PUBLIC STATEMENT

AI Index: MDE 28/7152/2017

22 September 2017

Amnesty International urges Algeria to ensure full respect of freedom of expression, association and religion

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Algeria

Amnesty international is deeply concerned by the continued threats and harassment of human rights defenders, journalists and peaceful protesters. The authorities have used a range of repressive laws to quell dissent and restrict the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly. While Amnesty International welcomes Algeria's acceptance of recommendations to bring its legal provision on freedom of association and assembly fully into line with international human rights standards,¹ it urges Algeria to publicly commit to a time-frame within which this will be accomplished. It is regrettable that Algeria rejected recommendations to abolish articles in the Penal Code which criminalize defamation with prison-terms.²

The authorities continue to deny long-standing requests to visit Algeria by the UN Special Procedures or to grant visas to international human rights organizations, including Amnesty International. The organization is deeply concerned by Algeria's rejection of a recommendation to facilitate the issuance of visas and accreditations without restriction to representatives of international organizations defending human rights and to foreign journalists.³ It also regrets Algeria's refusal to consider extending a standing invitation to the UN Special Procedures.⁴

In June 2017, Amnesty International raised concerns about a wave of repression against the religious minority Ahmadi, documenting the prosecution of 280 of its members in relation to their religious beliefs or practice.⁵ The organization regrets Algeria's lack of explicit commitment to guarantee the Ahmadi community freedom to practice their religion.⁶

In August 2017, the authorities resumed mass expulsions of Sub-Saharan migrants and refugees across the border into Niger. Amnesty International welcomes Algeria's commitment to

¹ A/HRC/36/13, recommendation 129.115. (Netherlands), 129.114. (France), 129.107. (Brazil), 129.108. (Mexico)

² A/HRC/36/13, recommendation 129.97. (Canada), 129.103. (United States of America)

³ A/HRC/36/13, recommendation 129.101. (France)

⁴ A/HRC/36/13, recommendations 129.30 (Uruguay, Belgium, Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

⁵ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/06/algeria-wave-of-arrests-and-prosecutions-of-hundreds-of-ahmadis/>

⁶ A/HRC/36/13, recommendation 129.87. (Canada), 129.89. (United States of America)

adopt national legislation implementing the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Optional Protocol⁷ and to grant protection to refugees determined as such by UNHCR.⁸

The organization is concerned that Algeria's Family Code continues to discriminate against women in relation to marriage, divorce, child custody and guardianship, and inheritance. It calls on Algeria's to reform the Family Code in line with recommendations received,⁹ and to repeal Article 339 of the Penal Code criminalizing same-sex sexual relations.¹⁰

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Algeria on 22 September 2017 during its 36th session. Prior to the adoption of the report of the review Amnesty International delivered an oral statement. Amnesty International also contributed to the information basis of the review through its submission on country: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/5941/2017/en/>

Public Document

International Secretariat, Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW, UK www.amnesty.org

⁷ A/HRC/36/13, recommendations 129.223. (Belgium), 129.224. (Germany), 129.225. (Mexico)

⁸ A/HRC/36/13, recommendations 129.222 (Sweden), 129.226. (Portugal)

⁹ A/HRC/36/13, recommendations 129.131 (Spain), 129.132 (Germany)

¹⁰ A/HRC/36/13, recommendations 129.60 (Canada), 129.61 (Sweden)