

URGENT ACTION

ALI AARRASS ILL BUT CONTINUES HUNGER STRIKE

Ali Aarrass was admitted to hospital on 27 October, two weeks after prison medical staff first recommended this. He is now back in Salé II prison, near Rabat, and is still in poor health.

Ali Aarrass was finally transferred to hospital on 27 October, two months after he began his hunger strike. His family have told Amnesty International that he is suffering numbness in his legs and that the pain in his head, liver and kidneys is so severe that he is no longer able to sleep.

A delegation of Morocco's National Human Rights Council (*Conseil national des droits de l'Homme*, CNDH) visited him on 26 October and told the prison authorities they should transfer him to hospital, which they did the following day. He underwent a series of medical examinations, and asked to go back to prison on 29 October so he could communicate with his family. He is still on hunger strike.

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

- Calling on the Moroccan authorities to ensure Ali Aarrass continues to have access to a qualified health professional who can provide health care in compliance with medical ethics, including the principles of confidentiality, autonomy and informed consent;
- Calling on them to ensure Ali Aarrass is protected from further ill-treatment, order a prompt, independent and impartial investigation into the ill-treatment he has said he suffered on 29 September, and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging them to carry out the August 2013 call by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) to release Ali Aarrass immediately and give him adequate compensation.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 11 DECEMBER 2015 TO:

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

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

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:

Ambassador Rachad Bouhlal, Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco
1601 21st St. NW, Washington DC 20009
Fax: 202 462 7643 (Ms. Mouna Mouline, Human Rights) | Phone: 202 462 7979 | Email: moroccoprotocol@gmail.com

Please let us know if you took action so that we can track our impact! EITHER send a short email to uan@aiusa.org with "UA 219/15" in the subject line, and include in the body of the email the number of letters and/or emails you sent, OR fill out this [short online form](#) to let us know how you took action. Thank you for taking action! Please check with the AIUSA Urgent Action Office if taking action after the appeals date. This is the second update of UA 219/15. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde29/2702/2015/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ali Aarrass is urging the Moroccan authorities to release him, two years after the UN 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 29/2773/2015 Issue Date: 30 October 2015