

URGENT ACTION

DETAINED JOURNALIST ENDS HIS HUNGER STRIKE

On 31 October 2019, detained journalist Rabie Lablak ended his 45 day-long hunger strike, which he started in protest of the alleged torture and ill-treatment he has suffered at the hands of Moroccan security officials. The prison administration claimed that Rabie never informed the administration of his hunger strike and that his activities proved he was in good health. In April 2019, Rabie Lablak was transferred to Tanger 2 prison after being detained in Casablanca prison in May 2017 for his involvement in the Hirak El-Rif protests.

TAKE ACTION:

1. Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
2. [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Urgent Action 140.19**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

Mr. Mustapha Ramid
Minister in charge of Human Rights
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et Rue Oued El Makhazine
Agdal - Rabat 10070
Fax: +212537671155

Her Highness Princess Lalla Joumala
Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco
3508 International Drive NW, Washington DC 20008
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Salutation: Your Highness

Your Excellency,

On 31 October 2019, the National Council for Human Rights (CNDH) announced that detained journalist Rabie Lablak decided to end his hunger strike after 45 days due to the deterioration of his health condition. Lablak began his hunger strike on 6 September 2019 in protest of the alleged torture and ill-treatment he has suffered at the hands of Moroccan security officials since his arrest in 2017.

In June 2018, Rabie Lablak was sentenced to five years in prison for "spreading false information and the usurpation of the profession of journalism" in what his lawyer alleges was an unfair trial.

I therefore ask you to immediately and unconditionally release Rabie Lablak and quash his conviction. Pending his release, I call on you to ensure he has access to qualified health professionals and healthcare provided in line with medical ethics, including the principles of confidentiality, autonomy, and informed consent. I finally call on you to investigate the conditions of his detention and the lack of adequate healthcare provided during his hunger strike.

Yours sincerely,

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Rabie Lablak is one of several Moroccan journalists, activists and human rights defenders who were sentenced to prison in 2017 for their involvement in peaceful protests as part of the Hirak El-Rif in Morocco. On 11 April 2019, he was transferred from Okasha Prison in Casablanca to Tangier 2 Prison in Tangier. This has further isolated Rabie and his fellow detainees, as it made it almost impossible for their families to visit detained relatives since it is very far from their homes. At the time of his transfer, Rabie was on a hunger strike, to demand freedom and protest an unfair trial.

Between 26 May and 15 July 2017, Moroccan law enforcement officers arrested 54 individuals with ties to Hirak El-Rif including protest leader Nasser Zefzafi, peaceful protesters Nabil Hamjike, Ouassim El Bousestatii, Achraf El Yakhloufi, Mohamed Jelloul, and Mohamed El Mejaoui, journalists Hamid El Mahdaoui and Rabie Lablak and citizen-journalists Mohamed El Asrihi, Hussein El Idrissi, Fouad Essaidi; and neighbours and friends of Nasser Zefzafi, including brothers Ibrahim and Othmane Bouziane.

The Hirak El-Rif called for social justice and improved public services in the long-marginalized northern region of Morocco. Defence lawyers say many are facing trumped-up charges because of their peaceful protest, dissent, or online coverage of the demonstrations. Since May 2017, police have arrested hundreds of people over the Rif protests, many of them arbitrarily, including peaceful activists and some journalists and many have already been sentenced to prison terms of up to 20 years on protest-related charges.

Several of the Hirak El-Rif detainees have gone on hunger strike since 2017, including 35 in Ain Sbaa 1 Local Prison in 2017. Some went on hunger strike to protest against apparent reprisals against hunger-strikers during cell and strip-searches on 20 September 2017. Morocco's General Delegation for Penitentiary Administration and Reinsertion has repeatedly denied the hunger strikes of Hirak EL-Rif detainees in public, even though several detainees met judicial officials and were moved to the prison infirmary because of their deteriorating health.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic, French or English
You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 18 December 2019.
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Rabie Lablak (he/him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde29/1296/2019/en/>