

# URGENT ACTION

## WOMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER FACING BOGUS CHARGES

French Tunisian human rights defender Saloua Ghrissa, executive director of the Association for the Promotion of the Right to Difference (ADD), is facing a criminal trial along with seven other staff and members of the association. They are being prosecuted on unfounded financial, criminal, and other charges stemming from their human rights work. On March 19, 2026, Tunisian authorities granted Saloua Ghrissa's request for provisional release after she spent more than 15 months in arbitrary pretrial detention. She was arrested in December 2024 amid a broader crackdown on civil society. Tunisian authorities must immediately drop all charges against Saloua Ghrissa and her co-defendants. The next hearing in their case is scheduled for April 30, 2026.

### TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **UA 24.26**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

#### President of the Republic Kais Saied

Route de la Goulette  
Site archéologique de Carthage, Tunisie  
Email: [contact@carthage.tn](mailto:contact@carthage.tn)  
X: @TnPresidency

#### Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mohamed Ali Nafti

Email: [email.dct@diplomatie.gov.tn](mailto:email.dct@diplomatie.gov.tn)

#### Ministry of Justice, Leila Jaffel

Email: [info@e-justice.tn](mailto:info@e-justice.tn)

*Send a copy of your letter to the address below*

#### CC: Tunisian Embassy in the United States Ambassador Hanene Al-Tajouri Bessassi

1515 Massachusetts Avenue, NW,  
Washington DC 20005

Email: [AT.Washington@Tunisianembassy.org](mailto:AT.Washington@Tunisianembassy.org)

Your Excellency,

I urge you to ensure that all the charges brought against woman human rights defender **Saloua Ghrissa and her colleagues** are dropped. Saloua Ghrissa is the executive director of the Association for the Promotion of the Right to Difference (ADD) – a Tunisian association founded in 2011 to defend minority rights.

Saloua Ghrissa, along with four other staff and three members of the ADD, is facing a criminal trial before the Bizerte Court of First Instance on unfounded financial and other charges. These charges infringe on their rights to freedom of expression and association, as well as their right to defend human rights. The next hearing in their case is scheduled for April 30, 2026.

I welcome Saloua Ghrissa's release from prison after more than 15 months of arbitrary pretrial detention. However, she continues to be prosecuted alongside other ADD staff and members on charges of money laundering and violations of currency exchange regulations. These charges are unsubstantiated and rest on vague allegations of so-called "suspicious" foreign funding.

I again urge you to ensure that all charges against Saloua Ghrissa and the seven other ADD staff and members are immediately dropped. I also call on you to put an end to the arbitrary arrests and prosecutions of human rights defenders and civil society workers in Tunisia.

Yours sincerely,

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

In May 2024, the Tunisian government launched a [repressive clampdown](#) against civil society organizations, first targeting those working on migration then [extending](#) the crackdown to a broader range of organizations. Since 2023, Tunisian President Kais Saied has repeatedly accused civil society of meddling in Tunisia's internal affairs, financing corruption, using foreign funding, and colluding with foreign parties to smear Tunisia.

ADD is a Tunisian human rights organization which seeks to defend the right to equality and non-discrimination, with a focus on ethnic, racial, and gender minority groups. Its work centers around advocacy for legal reform, raising awareness, and trainings about the right to equality. The NGO also distributed subgrants – including to antiracist organization [Mnemty](#) – and monitored violations of the right to equality through its Observatory for the Defense of the Right to Difference (O3DT).

On December 9, 2024, Tunis police summoned **Saloua Ghrissa and the secretary general of ADD** for questioning. They interrogated them about the association's work and funding and about their political opinions. Police informed them of the opening of an investigation against them based on a December 2023 report from the Tunisian Financial Analysis Committee (CTAF), a body under the Tunisian Central Bank. The report highlighted the receipt by the ADD of high amounts of foreign funding deemed "suspicious". In September 2023, the Tunisian president [called](#) on the CTAF to "hunt associations", claiming NGOs were receiving foreign funding to finance political activity and could be laundering money. On December 10, 2024, Saloua Ghrissa was detained by the police.

On December 12, 2024, an investigative judge at the Bizerte Court of First Instance opened an investigation against Saloua Ghrissa and **seven other employees and members of the association**. The judge placed Saloua Ghrissa in pretrial detention for six months. Her detention was renewed for another four months in June 2025 and then again in October 2025. Saloua Ghrissa's lawyer's multiple requests for provisional release were consistently denied until March 19, 2026.

On January 28, 2026, the investigative judge transferred the case to trial for seven out of eight defendants, maintaining four charges. On February 3, 2026, an indictment chamber partially overturned this decision, indicting all eight defendants. The trial opened on March 5, 2026, and was followed by a second hearing on March 19. A third hearing is scheduled for April 30, 2026.

The charges brought against the defendants are unsubstantiated and appear to be politically motivated, centered around vague "suspicions" solely based on the amounts and sources of foreign funding, which include international NGOs and a public aid agency. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association [stated](#): "In no cases may the pursuit of [Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Terrorism Financing] be used as a pretext to crack down on civil society groups which the government disfavors."

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Arabic, French, English, or your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** September 30, 2026

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Saloua Ghrissa (she/her)