

URGENT ACTION

FINAL APPEAL SCHEDULED IN “CONSPIRACY CASE”

The Court of Cassation’s review of the convictions in the “conspiracy case” took place on September 3, 2026. The conviction in this notorious case has seen prominent opposition figures, human rights defenders, and lawyers unjustly imprisoned for up to 45 years. Successive heatwaves in Tunisia, with temperatures above 45°C have further worsened detention conditions in poorly ventilated cells, affecting defendants’ health, particularly that of older detainees such as 82- year-old Ahmed Nejib Chebbi. Urgent action is needed now to call on the Tunisian authorities to immediately quash the unjust convictions and sentences and release all those detained solely for peacefully exercising their human rights.

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 **Seventh UA 52.23**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

President of the Republic Kais Saied

Email: contact@carthage.tn

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Presidence.tn/>

X: @TnPresidency

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

Your Excellency,

I am writing about the Court of Cassation hearing that was scheduled for September 3 in the politically motivated “conspiracy case” which saw prominent opposition figures, human rights defenders, and lawyers convicted after unfair trials. On November 27, 2025, the Tunis Court of Appeal upheld the convictions of 34 defendants and imposed prison sentences ranging from five to 45 years, following proceedings marred by serious violations of fair-trial rights. Those imprisoned include **Ayachi Hammami, Chaima Issa, Ahmed Nejib Chebbi, Jaouhar Ben Mbarek, Issam Chebbi, Ghazi Chaouachi, Ridha Belhaj, Khayam Turki, and Abdelhamid Jelassi.**

The continued imprisonment of the defendants is taking a severe toll on their health and well-being. The summer months have been particularly harsh for those detained with heatwaves of over 45 °C worsening conditions in poorly ventilated prison cells and exacerbating medical conditions.

I urge you to quash the unjust convictions and sentences of all defendants and to immediately and unconditionally release those who are detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights. Pending their release, ensure that all detained defendants are held in conditions that comply with international standards and have regular access to their families, lawyers, and adequate and timely healthcare.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The “conspiracy case” in Tunisia involves the prosecution of **37 opposition figures, lawyers, and activists** on politically motivated charges, primarily “conspiracy against state security,” which carry severe prison sentence with them.

In April 2025, the Tunis Court of First Instance handed down harsh prison terms, ranging from four to 66 years, following a trial widely condemned for its grave fair trial violations, lack of transparency, and executive interference. Defendants were not allowed to be present for their trial, based on the court’s decision to hold all terrorism trials remotely since April 2024. Evidence was neither publicly presented nor subjected to cross-examination, and access to the courtroom was denied to several independent journalists, civil society representatives, and members of the diplomatic community. The defendants were not allowed to attend in person, were not allowed to speak, and their lawyers were not given the opportunity to present their arguments before the court delivered its verdicts. Those sentenced included political opposition activists from across the political spectrum, businessman, lawyers, human rights defenders, and activists over two years after the investigation started in February 2023. The defendants were sentenced based on unfounded charges of conspiracy under 10 provisions of the Tunisian Penal Code including Article 72, which mandates the death penalty for trying to “change the nature of the state.” They were also sentenced on bogus terrorism related charges under the 2015 counterterrorism law including Article 32, which mandates up to 20 years of imprisonment for “forming a terrorist organization”. The charges and evidence presented were based solely on the defendants’ involvement in organizing political opposition or meetings including with foreign nationals.

Authorities had arbitrarily detained eight of the defendants in pre-trial detention since their arrest in February 2023 exceeding the legal limit of 14 months set out in the Code of Criminal Procedure: including politician **Khayyam Turki**, businessman **Kamel Ltaeif**; politician **Abdelhamid Jelassi**; opposition activist **Issam Chebbi**; opposition activist **Jaouhar Ben**; and lawyers and political activists **Ghazi Chaouachi** and **Ridha Belhaj**. Security forces arrested **Chaima Issa** and **Lazhar Akremi** in February 2023, but they were provisionally released on July 13, 2023, after nearly five months of arbitrary detention. Following their release, authorities banned them from traveling abroad and “appearing in public spaces”.

On February 22, 2023, President Saïed [declared](#) that anyone who “dared to exonerate” what he described as “criminal networks” was, in essence, an “accomplice.” This statement, coupled with the president’s [arbitrary dismissal](#) of 57 judges in 2022, has contributed to a growing climate of intimidation of the judiciary. The United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention issued an [opinion](#) concluding that “the violations of the eight individuals’ right to due process and a fair trial are of such gravity as to render their detention arbitrary”. The Court of Cassation hearing was announced only three days before its scheduled date of September 3, leaving the defendants and their lawyers very limited time to prepare their defense for this final stage of the proceedings.

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

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: February 1, 2027

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnestyusa.org/urgent-actions/tunisia-opposition-activists-unjustly-jailed/>