

# URGENT ACTION

## SIX PROTESTERS RELEASED, ONE REMAINS IMPRISONED

**Six men serving a one-year prison sentence for taking part in a peaceful protest in late December 2015 in Tamanrasset, southern Algeria, were released as part of a presidential pardon on 5 July. One other man, Dahmane Kerami, remains imprisoned.**

On the occasion of Algeria's Independence Day on 5 July, Algerian authorities pardoned and released six protesters imprisoned in the southern Algerian city of Tamanrasset. The men had been detained for over six months since their arrest on 31 December 2015, and were serving a one year prison sentence for taking part in an "unarmed gathering" and "offending public bodies". They had been prosecuted in relation to a peaceful protest about a real estate dispute outside the Tamanrasset governorate headquarters (*wilaya*) in December 2015.

The seventh defendant in the case, **Dahmane Kerami**, remains imprisoned in relation to another conviction for peaceful protest in Tamanrasset. On 7 October 2015, the Tamanrasset Court of First Instance convicted him and six other co-defendants of "rebellion", taking part in "unarmed gatherings" and "inciting" others to join "unarmed gatherings", during peaceful protests in 2014 and 2015, and sentenced them to one-year suspended prison terms and fines of 5,000 Algerian dinars (about 50 US dollars). The six co-defendants had their suspended sentences confirmed on appeal on 21 December 2015 while Dahmane Kerami's sentence was increased to an effective one-year prison term. He was transferred to Menea prison near Ghardaia, over 1060 km from Tamanrasset, in April.

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

- Urging the Algerian authorities to release Dahmane Kerami immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience, jailed solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression and assembly;
- Calling on them to amend legislation that criminalizes the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, including Article 97 of the Penal Code prohibiting "unarmed gatherings", Article 144 bis on "offending the President", and Article 146 on "offending public bodies";
- Urging them to stop arresting, prosecuting and imprisoning those exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 23 AUGUST 2016 TO:

#### President

Abdelaziz Bouteflika  
 Presidency of the Republic  
 El Mouradia, Algiers,  
 Algeria  
 Fax: +213 21 69 15 95 / 60 96 18  
 Email: [president@el-mouradia.dz](mailto:president@el-mouradia.dz)  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### Justice Minister

Tayeb Louh  
 Ministry of Justice  
 8 Place Bir Hakem  
 16030 El Biar, Algiers,  
 Algeria  
 Fax: +213 21 92 17 01  
 Email: [contact@mjustice.dz](mailto:contact@mjustice.dz)  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### **And copies to:**

President, National human rights institution  
 M. Mustapha Farouk Ksentini  
 Commission nationale consultative de promotion et de protection des droits de l'Homme  
 Palais du Peuple, Avenue Franklin Roosevelt,  
 Algiers, Algeria  
 Fax: +213 21 23 99 58  
 Email: [contact@cncppdh-algerie.org](mailto:contact@cncppdh-algerie.org)

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY Mr Amar Abba, People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, 1-3 Riding House Street W1W 7DR, 020 7229 7077, Fax 020 7229 7076, [info@algerianembassy.org.uk](mailto:info@algerianembassy.org.uk)**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 54/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE28/3874/2016/en/>

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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The actions for which Dahmane Kerami remains imprisoned include peaceful protests in support of the rights of workers laid off by a local gold mining company, as well as sit-ins denouncing the environmental consequences of shale gas fracking in the area, within a local protest group called “Ma Frat” (colloquial Algerian Arabic meaning “It has not been solved”). The National Committee for the Defence of the Rights of the Unemployed has also seen its members prosecuted and jailed for peaceful protests against unemployment.

See also the public statement, *Algeria: end relentless targeting of government critics*, published on 4 December 2015: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde28/2951/2015/en/>.

Further information on UA: 54/16 Index: MDE 28/4437/2016 Issue Date: 12 July 2016