

URGENT ACTION

JOURNALIST MOHAMED TAMALT DIES IN DETENTION

British-Algerian freelance journalist Mohamed Tamalt, 41, died in custody, on 11 December 2016, in Mohamed Lamine Debaghine University Hospital in Bab El Oued, Algiers, over 5 months after his arrest.

Mohamed Tamalt was arrested and detained on 27 June 2016. He immediately went on hunger strike in protest at his detention, before falling into a coma in late August. On 26 December 2016, Algeria's prison administration, the General Directorate for Penitentiary Administration and Rehabilitation, publicly announced that Mohamed Tamalt had died from an infection, citing the conclusions of an autopsy. Since he was admitted to hospital in late August, both the prison and health authorities failed to keep his family informed of his deteriorating health; nor did they notify the family of his death prior to the public announcement.

He was serving a two-year prison term for "offending" Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika and various public bodies and officials in Facebook posts. The posts, which also featured on his blog, included a video with an allegedly subversive poem and images of President Bouteflika. Mohamed Tamalt was imprisoned solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression.

Amnesty International has called on the Algerian authorities to conduct a prompt, thorough and independent investigation into the events from the time of his arrest up to his death, including his allegations of ill-treatment. Amnesty International also calls on the Algerian authorities to ensure that if the investigation finds that he was subjected to such ill-treatment, those suspected of criminal responsibility are held to account in trials that meet international fair trial standards and without recourse to the death penalty.

For more information, please see the [public statement](#) issued by Amnesty International on 11 January.

Even though we could not secure Mohamed Tamalt's release, and are deeply saddened by the events that unfolded, his family are very appreciative of Amnesty International's work on the case. They also appreciate our continued efforts to help them get the truth on the circumstances of his tragic death. The fight for justice is not over.

Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.

This is the second update of UA 155/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde28/4738/2016/en/>

Further information on UA: 155/16 Index: MDE 28/5574/2017 Issue Date: 10 February 2017

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**

