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Collective
of
Families
of the
Disappeared
in
Algeria

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شبكة المحامين للدفاع عن حقوق الانسان
The Network of Lawyers for the Human Rights
Réseau d'Avocats Pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme



Paris, 11 March 2015

The Collective of Families of the Disappeared in Algeria, the Network of Lawyers for the Human Rights (RADDH) and SOS Disappeared have come together to denounce the repression and serious violations of the freedom of assembly and peaceful protests to which unemployed persons and those supporting them are being subjected.

An appeal trial was meant to have been held today, Wednesday 11 March 2015, for eight human rights' defenders for the unemployed at the Laghouat Court of Appeal.

Khencha Belkacem, Brahimi Beelmi, Mazouzi Benallal, Azzouzi Boubakeur, Korini Belkacem, Bekouider Faouzi, Bensarkha Tahar and Djaballah Abdelkader were prosecuted for having organised a sit-in in front of the Laghouat tribunal on 28 January 2015 to protest the trial of their fellow activist, Mohamed Reg. During this peaceful demonstration, these members of the movement defending the rights of the unemployed were arrested and placed in detention.

On 11 February 2015, they were sentenced to 12 months in prison, 6 months of which were suspended, for "unarmed assembly" in line with article 97 of the penal code and for having "pressured the magistrates into making a decision" in line with article 147 of the same code. Following this sentencing, the eight activists appealed and went on hunger strike in protest.

The appeal trial was to take place today. The families of the accused, among many others, turned up to the Court of Appeal in support of the accused. However, no one was allowed to access the courtroom, not even the family members. Only the lawyers were authorised to enter. In light of this situation, the latter decided to withdraw from the trial as the conditions for a fair trial were not being met. The trial has therefore been moved to 25 March 2015. Many people were also arrested and taken to the police station.

Furthermore, CFDA, RADDH and SOS Disappeared are outraged about the sentencing of Rachid Aouine on 9 March 2015 by the correctional tribunal of El Oued to a six month prison sentence for organising an assembly in line with article 100 of the penal code: and all this simply because he had posted a comment on Facebook.

CFDA, RADDH and SOS Disappeared strongly oppose this repression and these violations of the freedom of expression, assembly and peaceful demonstration, and call on the Algerian State to respect these international commitments and especially article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and article 20 § 1 of the African Charter Human and People's Rights.

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CFDA spokesperson

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RADDH coordinator

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