



Hirak marks its first anniversary

On February 22, 2020, Algerian women and men were present to celebrate the first year of Hirak. They were thousands for this 53rd Friday to demonstrate in the heart of Algiers as well as in many other cities in the country to mark a year of popular protest and unprecedented.



On 21st February 2019 like a human tide, Algerian women and men of all ages invaded the streets in massive numbers, demanding the end of this system in place since 1962. This movement called the Hirak which has continued throughout the year, every Friday and every Tuesday since that date that pushed former

President Abdellaziz Bouteflika to resign less than six weeks from the Hirak. This peaceful protest is still today a growing movement, propelled by the youth, with the ambition to build a state of law and support a democratic transition. Even if all the popular claims are not met, the Algerian people have broken down the wall of fear and reappropriated the public space.

The families of the 'disappeared' in Algeria did not miss the call on Friday 22 February 2020. Every Friday afternoon they are present within this movement. Displaying photos of their children and demanding Truth and Justice, they have won the sympathy of this population demanding the rule of law. Mostly young, the demonstrators gathered around the mothers and took their slogans with them, spontaneously innovating songs about the 'disappeared' and songs of encouragement for the mothers.

Advocacy for the implementation of the recommendations of the Human Rights Committee

As part of its advocacy actions, a CFDA delegation led an advocacy mission to Geneva on 25 and 26 February 2020, in order to promote the implementation of the recommendations of the Human Rights Committee and inform about the current context in Algeria, particularly since the beginning of Hirak.

The delegation was received by the secretariats of the working groups of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as well as several special rapporteurs on freedom of opinion, assembly, torture, violence against women, the secretariat of the Committee against Enforced Disappearances, and the head of DESK Algeria.

These meetings were an opportunity for CFDA representatives to question their interlocutors on the many cases of enforced disappearances which took place in the 1990s, of which only a few remain unknown. Indeed, many people were arrested arbitrarily and disappeared without trace. Since then, the Algerian Government has been trying to bury the facts. It has thus offered compensation to the families of disappeared persons in exchange for which the latter had to have the death of their relative registered by a court through a death judgment. Even today, families are still struggling to obtain truth and justice.

UN members reminded the CFDA delegation of the procedures to be followed in transmitting individual cases. However, with regard to the referral of cases to the Committee on the Disappeared, since the facts predate ratification of the Convention, victims cannot submit individual communications to the Committee on the basis of the Convention. Algeria had only signed the Convention and had still not ratified it.

With regard to access to truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition, the secretariat of the Special Rapporteur working on this mandate indicated that the Special Rapporteur could intervene with Algeria and request the opening of a dialogue, as Algeria has presented the Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation as an instrument of transitional justice. To the extent that the Special Rapporteur considers that this instrument, presented as such, has not worked, he can address a recommendation to the Algerian Government to encourage it to start again, to establish a new operational transitional justice body.

Mothers of disappeared persons join the march for women's rights

Gatherings and demonstrations are at the heart of the struggle of families of the 'disappeared' for Truth and Justice. Every Wednesday since 1998, these mothers, wives, sisters and daughters of the 'disappeared' have held their weekly gatherings but also on key dates such as International Women's Rights Day. These women do not disarm, do not give up. They who have been fighting for so long are determined to wrest the truth from the Algerian authorities responsible for the disappearance of their loved one and to demand justice for these crimes of enforced disappearance.



March 8, 2020 was therefore an opportunity for these women to come together to continue to proclaim their demands but also to show their strength and their presence. Displaying pictures of their children, they shouted "Give us back our children". On the morning of 8 March, they gathered in front of the Human Rights Council and in the afternoon they went to the city centre to join the women's march organised by the "Collectives de lutte pour les droits des femmes".

A conference in Honour of International Women's Rights Day

On the occasion of the International Day for Women's Rights, on Monday 9 March, SOS Disparus organised in its premises in Algiers, a conference-debate entitled 'Women fighting for their rights'. The event was notably led by

GhaniaMouffok, journalist and human rights activist, Maître Mustapha Bouchachi, lawyer and activist, as well as MrsBoucherf and MrsBouabdallah, both mothers of the 'disappeared'.



The speakers at this conference did not fail to recall the struggle of women since 1998, whether they are mothers, wives, sisters or daughters of the 'disappeared'. Since the disappearance of one of their relatives, they have lived so that the memory of their children does not fade away.

GhaniaMouffok said that "the women of the disappeared question power and society" and that it is a collective affair. The journalist also recalled the impunity that reigns around these crimes of enforced disappearance, and the question of the invisibility of the perpetrator of this crime. GhaniaMouffok retraced the journey of women against imposed silences and their resistance against oblivion by keeping memories alive.

The mothers of the 'disappeared' gave testimony



on their struggle and paid tribute to all the mothers of the 'disappeared' with whom they fought and who died without being able to know the truth.

Hirak marks Meeting of SOS Disparus with political parties

As part of its advocacy missions, the association SOS Disparus regularly organises meetings with national actors, such as politicians.

A delegation from SOS Disparus thus met two political parties on 13 February 2020: the "Front des Forces Socialistes" and the "JilJadid" party.

These meetings are always an opportunity for the association not to let the dossier of the 'disappeared' sink into oblivion, to recall the strong demands of the families of disappeared persons and of all the victims of the 1990s, namely the Truth and Justice.

These demands are therefore illustrated by the establishment of a Truth Commission or the setting up of transitional justice mechanisms. The delegation also insisted on the fact that the United Nations Human Rights Committee has made its recommendations following the review of Algeria in July 2018 and that it is important that the political parties open debates within the Algerian People's Assembly and call on the ministers to implement these recommendations.

Briefs

Judicial harassment of Hirak protesters continues

In the midst of the truce of the Hirak movement to stop the spread of Covid-19, legal action continues against the demonstrators. Indeed, on Tuesday 24 March, when he was due to be released from prison on Thursday 26 March, KarimTabbou, coordinator of the Democratic and Social Union Party was sentenced on appeal by the Court of Ruisseau to one year in prison and a fine of 50,000 dinars.

This unfair trial nevertheless took place while KarimTabbou was the victim of a malaise and was urgently transferred to the Court infirmary. Nevertheless, the postponement of the hearing requested by the lawyers was not granted and the judge still sentenced KarimTabbou to one year in prison.

This sentence in total contradiction with human rights, and in particular the right to a fair trial, provoked a reaction from NGOs, in particular the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and Amnesty International.

The participation of the CFDA in a training workshop "Introduction to Psychotrauma".

A forum organized by the RAJ on the occasion of the first anniversary of Hirak

On the occasion of Hirak's 22 February anniversary, the RAJ (Youth Action Gathering)organised a forum led by sociologist NacerDjabi to recall the demands of this popular movement which was born on 22 February 2019.

This forum was an opportunity to pay tribute to the youth who propelled this mobilization, by affirming that "the youth of 22 February have liberated us". It is indeed the youth who rallied around the RAJ to mobilize in the face of a political system that has been in place for years. This NGO bringing together young people, students, academics, and other stakeholders works for the promotion of social rights, Human Rights and stresses the importance of citizenship and solidarity.

Similarly, the sociologist denounced the power in place which "continues to ignore the movement" and has no will to respond to popular demands. Finally, he called on the students to continue the mobilization and to structure themselves in a national coordination.

"The one who has been tortured remains tortured. Torture is branded in his flesh with a branding iron, even when no clinically objective trace can be found". This quotation from Jean Améry was part of the training workshop, in which the CFDA participated on 7-8 March 2020 in Tunis, entitled "Introduction to Psychotrauma". The training was led by Doctor RiadhBouزيد, AïdaNaffeti. The training was co-organised by DIGNITY, NEBRAS and APV.

The training program consisted of chapters on the definition of psychotrauma, psychological sequelae of psychotrauma, concept of stress, traumatic memory, narrative exposure therapy, supervision.

What is psychotrauma? The training began by defining that a psychotrauma is "a given event, unique or repetitive, which exceeds the individual's capacity for mentalization and metabolization, which causes psychological or physical harm/damage". It causes "a more or less lasting disorganization of the psychic life".

The training dealt with typologies of traumas, psychological sequelae dominated by Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The training helped to explain possible traumas, for example for torture victims.

Press Reviews

January

<http://bit.ly/2TnkXYA>

February

<http://bit.ly/2UgISt9>

March

<https://bit.ly/3aKrXo3>

Contacts

Email : cfda@disparus-algerie.org

Website : www.algerie-disparus.org

Linktree : <https://linktr.ee/cfda.sosdisparus>

Phone : 0033 (0)9 53 36 81 14

