

# MOROCCO

## Nawal Benaissa: Hounded for demanding social justice and better health care services

Women human rights defender Nawal Benaissa speaks out for social justice and better health care services in her region of Rif where many people feel forgotten by their government.



As one of the leading voices of a popular movement called Hirak, she's participated in peaceful protests and campaigned for change on social media.

But every step of the way, she's been harassed by the Moroccan authorities in an attempt to silence her. They arrested her. They held her in custody four times in four months. They demanded that she close her popular Facebook profile which had 80,000 followers.

Finally, in February 2018, she was given a 10-month suspended sentence and a fine for "inciting to commit an offence." Still the intimidation continues. She moved to another city to avoid the constant surveillance.

Nawal's treatment is part of a major crackdown on the Hirak movement and its leaders. Moroccan security forces have arrested hundreds of peaceful protesters — some just for expressing their support on Facebook. For Nawal, the solution is simple. She wants to be completely free to advocate for a better future for her community and her children.

Women human rights defenders in Morocco may be targeted because of their gender as well as what they are advocating for.

**Ask Morocco to stop harassing Nawal.  
Take action on the next page.**

*Everyone has the right to  
security of person and the  
right to freedom of  
expression.*

*Articles 3 and 19,  
Universal Declaration  
of Human Rights*

**WRITE  
FOR  
RIGHTS**

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



## Unleash your pens and keyboards!

### Please write to the Prime Minister.

- ◆ Start with Your Excellency.
- ◆ Describe who you are and what concerns you about continual harassment of Nawal Benaissa.
- ◆ Ask him for effective and prompt steps to halt the harassment of Nawal, as she is a peaceful protestor and human rights defender who just wants a better life for people in her region.

### Send your letter to

Prime Minister Saad Dine Al Othmani  
Department of the Head of Government  
Palais Royal Touarga  
Rabat, Morocco

Postage: \$2.50

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/cg.gov.ma](http://www.facebook.com/cg.gov.ma)

Twitter: @ChefGov\_ma

### Please send a copy to

Her Excellency Souriya Otmani  
Ambassador for the Kingdom of Morocco  
38 Range Road  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J4

Postage: \$.85

Fax: 613 236 6164

Phone: 613 236 7391 or 613 236 6064

E-mail: [sifamaot@bellnet.ca](mailto:sifamaot@bellnet.ca)

*Human rights defenders like Nawal Benaissa are at risk around the world. Join Amnesty's efforts to protect the rights of those who defend our rights.*

#WriteforRights #Hirak #W4R18 #WHRD  
[www.amnesty.ca](http://www.amnesty.ca)



Nawal Benaissa of the grassroots Al-Hirak Al-Shaabi movement poses for a photo during a protest in May 2017 in Al-Hoceima city to demand the release of Nasser Zefzafi, head of the Al-Hirak.

© AFP/Getty Images

### Support Nawal!

Send your messages of solidarity and courage to her, so she can know there are people around the world who respect the work she does. Use \$2.50 postage to **send a greeting without reference to religion or alcohol**, or connect with her on Facebook.

Nawal Benaissa  
c/o Amnesty International Morocco  
20 rue Ouargha appartement 5 Agdal  
10000 Rabat - Morocco  
[www.facebook.com/nawal.ben.90281](http://www.facebook.com/nawal.ben.90281)

*Women human rights defenders around the world often face a heightened risk of discrimination and violence because of their gender and because of the social change for which they advocate. These risks are compounded for women experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.*

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TAKE PART: [writeathon.ca](http://writeathon.ca)