



**Urgent Action Office** 3-1992 Yonge Street Toronto ON M4S 1Z7 Phone: (416) 363-9933 Fax: (416) 363-3103 [urgentaction@amnesty.ca](mailto:urgentaction@amnesty.ca)  
First UA: 37/23 Index: MDE 28/6664/2023 Algeria of April 11, 2023

## **ALGERIA**

### **FREE JOURNALIST SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS**

On April 02, the tribunal of Sidi M'hamed in Algiers convicted prominent Algerian journalist Ihsane El Kadi to five years in prison. He was also slapped with a fine of 700,000 Algerian dinars (around USD 5,150). The court ordered the dissolution of his media company, one of the last media outlets in the country, and a fine of 10 million Algerian dinars (around USD 73,862).

He was convicted on charges of "*receiving funds for political propaganda*" and "*harming the national security of the state*", solely for investing money sent to him by his daughter into his media company and doing his job as a journalist.

His conviction is a clear violation of his right to freedom of expression and the latest example of the Algerian authorities tightening their grip on critical voices and the independent media. He must be released immediately and unconditionally, and his conviction must be quashed.

#### **Write to the President of Algeria urging him to:**

- Immediately and unconditionally release Ihsane El Kadi and quash his conviction.
- End the targeted crackdown and censorship of independent media and journalists in Algeria through vaguely worded articles of the Penal Code which are used to violate the right to freedom of expression.

#### **Write to:**

President of the Republic of Algeria  
Abdelmadjid Tebboune  
Presidence de la republique  
Place Mohammed Seddik Benyahya, El Mouradia,  
Alger 16000 Algeria  
Email: [President@el-mouradia.dz](mailto:President@el-mouradia.dz)  
Salutation: *Your Excellency*:

#### **And copy:**

Algerian National Human Rights Council (CNDH)  
Avenue Franklin Roosevelt - Palais du Peuple, Alger, Algérie  
Email: [contact@cndh.org.dz](mailto:contact@cndh.org.dz)

His Excellency Nouredine BARDAD DAIDJ  
Ambassador  
Embassy of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  
500 Wilbrod Street  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N2  
Tel: (613) 789-8505; -0282  
Email: [info@embassyalgeria.ca](mailto:info@embassyalgeria.ca)

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Ihsane El Kadi is a journalist and the director and founder of “Interface Media”, which comprises media outlets Radio M and Maghreb Emergent. Ihsane El Kadi has written several articles openly criticizing the Algerian authorities who have responded by harassing him and targeting his media outlets. The websites of both Radio M and Maghreb Emergent were blocked inside Algeria in 2020. On several occasions since 2021, security services summoned Ihsane El Kadi to the Antar security center in Algiers, where he was interrogated.

After the security officials arrested Ihsane El Kadi at his home on December 24, 2022, they led him in handcuffs to the offices of his media outlet, where they ordered staff to leave, seized computers and other materials and sealed the doors, without providing any explanation nor informing him of the allegations on which he was arrested. Security officers held Ihsane El Kadi for five days and interrogated him about his publications.

On December 24, 2022, an investigative judge at the first instance Tribunal of Sidi M’hamed in Algiers ordered his detention at El Harrach prison after a prosecutor charged him with several offences under the Penal Code, including receiving funds “that could harm the security of the State”, receiving foreign funds “for political propaganda”, and distributing or selling propaganda “with the aim of harming the national interest” – a charge which was later dropped. The judge also accused him based on Ordinance 77-3 dating back to 1977, which requires prior authorization from the governor or the Minister of Interior for fundraising. On January 15, 2023, a judge in the Sidi M’hamed court renewed Ihsane El Kadi’s pretrial detention without the presence of his lawyer, so breaching his fair trial rights.

Two courts in Algeria previously prosecuted Ihsane El Kadi in February and March 2022 for “terrorism” and other charges because he was in contact with Zaki Hannache and Tahar Khouas, two human rights defenders who were detained in Algeria for several weeks. The charges against him were dropped but, in June 2022, he was convicted to six months in prison in a third case for an article he wrote in 2021 about the role of the non-recognized political party Rachad in the protest movement Hirak, following a complaint filed against him by the Minister of Communication.

The most recent prosecution of Ihsane El Kadi adds to the swell of repression in Algeria, which has been building over the past two years, as Algerian authorities relentlessly target journalists and independent critics. The Algerian authorities’ crackdown on critical voices shows no signs of abating. In the past two years, at least 280 journalists, bloggers, activists and human rights defenders have been harassed and unlawfully imprisoned on charges related to the exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

**\*\*\* Please take action at your earliest convenience!**