



CAIRO INSTITUTE
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES
Institut du Caire pour les études des droits de l'homme
مركز القاهرة لدراسات حقوق الإنسان



Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network
Réseau Euro-méditerranéen des droits de l'homme
الشبكة الأوروبية المتوسطية لحقوق الإنسان

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DEFENDERS



CPJ

United Nations Human Rights Council: 30th Session

Item 4: General Debate

Oral Intervention

22 September, 2015

Delivered by: Ms. Salma Amer

Thank you Mr. President

Our organizations express concern regarding the increasing restrictions against independent human rights groups and defenders, and journalists in Morocco. Patterns of restrictions include ongoing banning of NGO activities, administrative impediment on the legal registration of NGOs, and a range of other rights violations against human rights defenders.

To date, 37 out of 97 branches of the Moroccan Association for Human Rights (AMDH) across the country are facing administrative obstacles to renewing their legal registration. In addition, and since July 2014, AMDH alone has seen 93 of its activities banned by authorities. The activities of several independent NGOs in Morocco have been repeatedly banned since mid-2014. Such restrictions on civil society and public freedoms undermine the legitimacy of the electoral process that Morocco has begun last month.

Rights activists have also been subjected to travel bans, judicial harassment and intimidation by security forces.

Last week, the President of the human rights association Freedom Now, **Maati Munjib**, was summoned for investigation over his human rights work, where he was repeatedly accused of defamation, spreading false news, and harming Morocco's image. While he has not been presented with formal charges, however a travel ban has imposed against him.

On 8 September 2015, the Vice President of the Moroccan Association for Digital Rights (ADN), **Karima Nader** was interrogated in relation to a report prepared by Privacy International on online surveillance in Morocco. She was presented with very serious charges that, if indicted, would amount to several years in prison. The

charges include “false denunciations”, “depreciating the efforts of the state”, and “insulting authorities.”

Similarly, on 25 August 2015, human rights defender **Samad Iach**, member of the Moroccan Association for Investigative Journalism, was banned from travelling by Moroccan security forces at the Airport. Iach was summoned for interrogation earlier on 15 August 2015 and questioned about his work as a journalist and human rights defender. He was charged with “undermining the allegiance of citizens with respect to constitutional institutions”, “attempting to establish fitna (unrest)” and “working for foreign agendas.” He was subsequently released.

We call upon the Moroccan government to halt undue restrictions imposed on civil society and cease all harassment of human rights defenders in accordance with the Moroccan constitution and Morocco's human rights obligations. We remind the Moroccan government of the crucial role of civil society in the democratization process. An empowered and free independent civil society is one of the pillars of democratic governance and a key actor in supporting stability and progress in the country, and is indispensable to ensure the success of Morocco's democratic transition.

Thank you Mr. President