



Brussels, 4 September 2020

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Head of Government of the Kingdom of Morocco
Mr Saad-Eddine El Othmani

Head of Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the European Union
Mr Ahmed Rahhou

President of the National Human Rights Council
Ms Amina Bouayach

RE: release of Hirak Rif prisoners during public health crisis

To the Head of Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mr Saad-Eddine El Othmani,

We write to you in a spirit of solidarity in these difficult times. As Members of the European Parliament, we reiterate our concerns regarding the situation of the Hirak Rif political prisoners in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many remain in closed, densely crowded prisons where they are at acute risk of contamination and commonly lack adequate access to healthcare. Furthermore, the physical condition of several Hirak Rif prisoners is severely weakened by intermittent hunger strikes.

We remain particularly concerned about the health situation of Nabil Ahamjik and Nasser Zefzafi, who are detained in isolation modules and have been on hunger strike since 14 August; Mohamed Haki, Bilal Ahabad and Zakaria Adahchour, who are also on hunger strike; Achraf Moudid, whose health situation is complicated by a recent suicide attempt; Wassim Bousttati, who is in urgent need of surgery for his heart condition; and Mohamed Jelloul, who is detained in isolation.

We therefore call on you, as Head of the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, to prioritise humanitarian considerations and release all Hirak political prisoners in accordance with the recommendations made by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the repeated calls by the Freedom and Human Rights Organisation. Until their release, we further call on you to:

- Guarantee the safety, physical integrity and psychological well-being of the Hirak Rif prisoners by ensuring their immediate access to adequate medical care, with particular regard for the urgent medical situations of Wassim Bousttati, Achraf Moudid, and those detained in isolation;
- Provide all Hirak Rif prisoners with regular and adequate opportunities for communication with their families and lawyers;
- Ensure that the detention of all Hirak Rif prisoners takes place in close proximity to their friends, family and loved ones, and that these are able to pay regular visits to the prisoners; and
- Introduce emergency measures to safeguard the health of prisoners to prevent the transmission of COVID-19, in particular with regard to food, health, hygiene and quarantine.

The recent release of a number of Hirak Rif political prisoners in recent weeks is a positive first step towards the release of all Hirak Rif prisoners. We wish you the very best in your efforts to protect the well-being of all people living in the Kingdom of Morocco.

Sincerely,

Miguel Urbán Crespo, MEP GUE/NGL

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