

URGENT ACTION

JOURNALIST'S SENTENCE CONFIRMED ON APPEAL

On October 12, 2023, the Algerian Supreme Court rejected two appeals made by Ihsane El Kadi's lawyers, effectively upholding his seven-year sentence, which includes five years in prison and two years on probation. Imprisoned since December 24, 2022, Ihsane El Kadi had been convicted because of his writing. Authorities should ensure Ihsane El Kadi's immediate release from El Harrach prison.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
- [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Third Urgent Action 37.23**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

President of the Republic of Algeria

Abdelmadjid Tebboune

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Algerian Embassy in the United States

His Excellency Ambassador Mohammed Haneche

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Salutation: Dear Ambassador Mohammed Haneche

Your Excellency, or Dear Ambassador,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the ongoing detention of journalist, **Ihsane El Kadi** following the decision by the Algerian Supreme Court to reject his appeal and thus uphold his sentences of seven years, which are based on trumped up and vague charges.

On October 12, 2023, Algeria's highest court rejected two appeals filed by Ihsane El Kadi's lawyers. The first cassation appeal contested Ihsane El Kadi's sentencing for receipt of foreign funds with the intent to "undermine state security," based on his financing of his independent media company. The second appeal was related to an earlier conviction of Ihsane El Kadi for an article he published which explored the role of the non-recognized political party, Rachad, in the protest movement, Hirak.

I urge you to grant Ihsane El Kadi a presidential pardon. I further demand that you 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.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ihsane El Kadi (64), is a journalist and the director and founder of “Interface Media”, which comprises of media outlets Radio M and Maghreb Emergent. He has written several articles openly criticizing the Algerian authorities who 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 be interrogated.

On December 24, 2022, plainclothes security officials arrested Ihsane El Kadi at his home in Zemmouri, and later that day led him in handcuffs to the offices of his online media outlets Radio M and Maghreb Emergent. They ordered staff to leave, seized computers and other materials, and sealed the doors, without providing any explanation nor informing him of the allegations for which he was arrested. Security officers held Ihsane El Kadi for five days and interrogated him about his publications. On December 29, 2022, an investigative judge ordered the detention of Ihsane El Kadi at El Harrach prison after a prosecutor charged him with several offenses, 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. 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, 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.

On April 2, 2023, the tribunal of Sidi M’hamed in Algiers convicted Ihsane El Kadi to five years in prison, of which two were suspended, a fine of 700,000 Algerian dinars (around USD 5,150) and ordered the dissolution of his media company, one of the last independent media outlets in the country. It also ordered the media company to pay damages to the Algerian audio-visual regulatory body. Ihsane El Kadi was convicted for investing money sent to him by his daughter into his media company and carrying out his work as a journalist. On June 18, 2023, the Algiers Court of Appeal announced the verdict of Ihsane El Kadi’s appeals trial, confirming his conviction and increasing his sentence from five to seven years, two years of which were suspended. The appeals court failed to recognize and remedy violations against Ihsane El Kadi from the moment of his arrest.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic, French, English, or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: March 12, 2024

NAME AND PRONOUN: Ihsane El Kadi (He/Him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde28/6664/2023/en/>