

BEATEN, BURNT AND GIVEN ELECTRIC SHOCKS



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ALI AARRASS

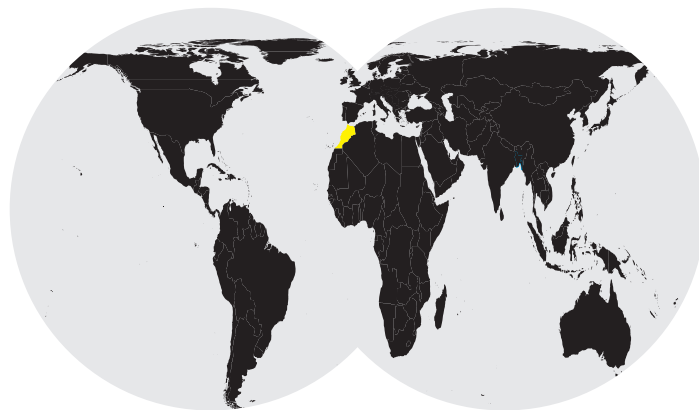
Morocco

On 14 December 2010, Ali Aarrass, a Belgian-Moroccan national, was forcibly returned to Morocco from Spain, where he had been supporting his ageing father. The extradition took place despite warnings from the UN Human Rights Committee and Amnesty International that doing so would put the father-of-one at risk of incommunicado detention, torture and other ill-treatment, and unfair trial.

Ali has been detained ever since. For the first 12 days he was held incommunicado and tortured in a secret detention centre: he was beaten on the soles of his feet, given electric shocks to his testicles, suspended from his wrists, and burnt with cigarettes.

On 19 November 2011, Ali was convicted of illegal use of weapons and participation in a group intending to commit acts of terrorism. He was convicted solely on the basis of a 'confession' extracted under torture. In September 2012 the UN Special Rapporteur on torture, Juan Mendez, and an independent forensic doctor visited Ali in detention and confirmed his torture claims.

The Moroccan authorities have repeatedly failed to investigate Ali's assertions that he was held incommunicado and tortured.



COUNTRY BACKGROUND

There is a failure in Morocco to investigate allegations of torture, prosecute those responsible or compensate and care for victims. Judges and magistrates rely almost exclusively on 'confessions' extracted in police custody under torture or duress. They often refuse to hear defence witnesses or consider any other type of evidence.

Detainees held for interrogation by the Department of State Surveillance are at particular risk of torture. UN Special Rapporteur on torture Juan Mendez noted a 'systematic pattern of acts of torture and ill-treatment during the detention and arrest process' for detainees in 'national security' and 'terrorism' cases.

TAKE ACTION

Amnesty International is calling on the Minister of Justice and Liberties to increase the rate and quality of investigations into allegations of torture and end the use of forced confessions in legal proceedings.

Please write to:

Minister of Justice and Liberties El Mustapha Ramid
Ministère de la Justice et des Libertés
Place El Mamounia – BP 1015
Rabat
MOROCCO

SAMPLE LETTER

This is an example of what you could write. Please include the three bullet points below in your own letter.

Your Excellency,

Ali Aarrass was tortured for 12 days by government officials from the General Directorate for the Surveillance of the Territory (DST). He was held incommunicado in a secret detention centre in Témara, where he was beaten on the soles of his feet, received electric shocks to his testicles, and suspended for long periods from the wrists.

Ali Aarrass was convicted solely on the basis of a 'confession' extracted under torture. In September 2012, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture, Juan Mendez, and an independent forensic doctor visited him in detention and confirmed his torture claims.

So far, the only step the Moroccan authorities have taken in relation to these claims is a forensic medical examination that fell well short of international standards outlined in the Istanbul Protocol.

I urge you to:

- Implement the decision of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention calling for the immediate release of Ali Aarrass.
- Investigate reports that he was tortured or otherwise ill-treated.
- Introduce video-recording and make the presence of defence lawyers compulsory in pre-arraignment detention, as a safeguard against torture and other ill-treatment.

SOLIDARITY WITH ALI

A solidarity message takes only a few minutes, but can make all the difference to Ali and his family. Please let Ali know that you are thinking of him and support his struggle for justice.

Address: Ali Aarrass
Prison Locale de Salé II
Salé
Morocco

Preferred language: French, Spanish or English

Suggested message:

Ali, we stand in solidarity with you, and denounce the torture and unfair trial you have been put through. **(In French: 'Ali, nous sommes à tes côtés et dénonçons la torture et le procès inéquitable que tu as subi.')**

Can I send a religious card? No

Can I mention Amnesty? Yes

Can I include a return address? Yes

Amnesty International has campaigned against torture for over half a century. Thirty years ago we helped to secure an historic global ban.

But the governments that signed up to it have failed to live up to their promises. They still use torture to obtain 'confessions', to silence opposition – or simply to punish.

Everybody in the world has the right to live free from torture.

To find out more about this case:

www.amnesty.org.uk/stoptorture