

28 June 2021

Algeria: Human rights defender Abd Al Hamid Goura fined and sentenced to three months suspended imprisonment

On 20 June 2021, the Court of First Instance in the city of Laghouat sentenced human rights defender **Abd Al Hamid Goura** to three months suspended imprisonment, and a fine of 20,000 Algerian Dinar (approximately 125 Euros). The human rights defender is convicted of ‘incitement on illegal gathering’, ‘participating in unarmed gathering’, ‘insulting the president’ and ‘insulting the regime’.

[Abd Al Hamid Goura](#) is head of the Laghouat section of the Ligue Algérienne pour la Défense des Droits de l’Homme (Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights) which is an independent association working on the documentation of human rights violations committed by security services and armed groups in Algeria. The organisation mainly focuses on enforced disappearances and cases of activists jailed for their views .

On 18 June 2021, Abd Al Hamid Goura was arrested from a Hirak peaceful demonstration in the city of Laghouat. He was attacked by approximately 20 police officers, some of whom were in plain clothes. The police officers reportedly used electric shocks and sticks to attack him and other peaceful protesters. The human rights defender was arrested and taken to a police station where he was interrogated by police officers, which is a violation to the Algerian Criminal procedures law, which states that an interrogation must be carried out only by a judge, and police officers can only attend an interrogation During the interrogation, the human rights defender reported being subjected to physical abuse, which caused him injuries in his both shoulders, and knee. During his detention he was not allowed to contact his family or lawyer. The human rights defenders lawyer was only allowed to observe the interrogation and to attend the court hearing session on 20 June 2021. On 20 June 2021, the court convicted Abd Al Hamid Goura of ‘inciting on illegal gathering’, ‘participating in unarmed gathering’, ‘insulting the president’ and ‘insulting the regime’, and he received a three months suspended sentence and a fine of 20,000 Algerian Dinar (approximately 125 Euros).

Human rights defender Abd Al Hamid Goura has been frequently harassed by the Algerian authorities. In December 2018, he was subjected to an [interrogation](#) only a few hours after a statement by the regional section of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights was released, denouncing the use of police violence against citizens in the city of Laghouat.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned regarding the conviction of human rights defender Abd Al Hamid Goura. Front Line Defenders believes that the human rights defender is being convicted and sentenced solely as a result of his peaceful and legitimate human rights work.

Front Line Defenders urges the Algerian authorities to:

1. Immediately quash the conviction of human rights defender Abd Al Hamid Goura, as Front Line Defenders believes that he has been targeted solely as a result of his legitimate human rights work;
2. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the physical abuse of Abd Al Hamid Goura, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;

3. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in Algeria and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.