

28 February 2022

Algeria: Human rights defenders Faleh Hammoudi sentenced to 3 years in prison and Zaki Hannache detained with no charges

There has been an escalation of repression against human rights defenders in Algeria. On 20 February 2020, the Tlemcen Court of Misdemeanours, in Northern Algeria, convicted human rights defender **Faleh Hammoudi** to 3 years' imprisonment and a fine of 100,000 Algerian dinar (approximately 628 euros). On 18 February 2022, human rights defender **Zaki Hannache** was arrested by plain-clothes officers. On February 24, he was presented to a judge and charged.

[Faleh Hammoudi](#) is the head of the Tlemcen office of the Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights (LADDH), and the national secretary of the Autonomous National Union of Public Administration Staff (SNAPAP), in charge of the human rights and migration department. Faleh Hammoudi monitors and documents migration flows from Algeria to the EU. He is a member of the EuroMed Rights Migration and Asylum Working Group.

[Zaki Hannache](#) is a human rights defender working on documenting violations of human rights in Algeria. After the *Hirak* movement took hold in 2019, Zaki Hannache worked to collect, verify and document the cases of arrests happening to people who took part in the protests. Zaki Hannache also works to document and advocate for the rights and releases of defenders who were sentenced to imprisonment.

On 20 February 2022, the Tlemecen Court of Misdemeanours charged human rights defender Faleh Hammoudi with the misdemeanours of 'running and managing an unsanctioned organisation', 'insulting a statutory body' and 'deliberately publishing or deliberately promoting by any means false news or news that would prejudice public security' on his Facebook account. The human rights defender was convicted after an arbitrary process and sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment and a fine of 100,000 Algerian dinar (approximately 628 euros).

On 19 February 2022, Faleh Hammoudi was arrested and placed under investigation by members of the National Gendarmerie. The human rights defender had his house searched and his phone and computer confiscated before his immediate appearance in front of the Public Prosecutor and sentence on 20 February 2022.

On 18 February 2022, Zaki Hannache was arrested around 4PM by four plain-clothes officers in his home in Cherarba, Algiers. The human rights defender had his home searched and his phone confiscated by the officers. The human rights defender was placed in custody. On 24 February 2022, Zaki Hannache appeared before an investigative judge, and was indicted with a number of charges including "praising terrorism" and "receiving funds from an institution inside or outside the country" and "undermining state security". If convicted he could face 35 years imprisonment to life imprisonment and/or the death penalty.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the terrorist charges and allegations brought against the human rights defenders in response to their peaceful and legitimate human rights work.

Front Line Defenders believes that the actions taken against the two human rights defenders are solely motivated by their peaceful and legitimate human rights activities.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Algeria to:

1. Immediately drop all charges against Faleh Hammoudi and Zaki Hannache, as it is believed that they are solely motivated by his legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights;
2. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Algeria are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions, including judicial harassment.