

21 May 2020

### **Tunisia: Defamation campaign against woman human rights defender Fatma Moatemri**

Woman human rights defender **Fatma Moatemri** has been subjected to an online defamation campaign. Since a video of her was published on social media on 12 May 2020, Fatma Moatemri has received several death threats and called an 'infidel'.

Fatma Moatemri is a woman human rights defender and a journalist in Tunisia and a member of the Tunisian Association for Democratic Women. Her work is primarily focused on promoting women's rights in Tunisia and exposing corruption issues.

On 12 May 2020, a video of Fatma Moatemri chatting with friends and having an alcoholic drink was posted on social media. The video was labelled 'girls having sex' and was posted during the month of Ramadan, despite the fact that it had been taken months prior. Since the video was posted online, Fatma Moatemri has received several death threats and has been labelled an 'infidel'. Fatma Moatemri does not know the individual who posted the video, nor is she familiar with any of those who left threatening comments below the video. Front Line Defenders believes that the individual who posted the video gave it a misleading title so as to drive more traffic to it and posted it intentionally during Ramadan in an attempt to discredit her and her human rights work.

Fatma Moatemri has been subjected to harassments and defamation campaigns online several times in the past regarding her peaceful and legitimate human rights work. On these occasions, no serious action was taken by the Tunisian authorities to protect the defender from the online harassment and threats. Fatma Moatemri believes that latest smear campaign against her is related to her recent reporting on corruption.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned at the harassment and defamation campaign against woman human rights defender Fatma Moatemri. Front Line Defenders believes that she is solely being targeted for her peaceful and legitimate human rights work.

### **Front Line Defenders urge the Tunisian authorities to:**

1. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the slanderous comments and death threats against Fatma Moatemri, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
2. Make all necessary efforts to protect the physical and psychological integrity of woman human rights defender Fatma Moatemri.
3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Tunis are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.