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Tunisia: Death threats and smear campaign against woman human rights defender Rania Amdouni

Since late January 2020, woman human rights defender **Rania Amdouni** has been targeted with death threats and an intensified smear campaign linked to her peaceful human rights work.

[Rania Amdouni](#) is an artist, woman human rights defender, and member of Damj (the Tunisian Association for Justice and Equality). Her work focuses on achieving gender equality and empowering women in Tunisia. She also defends the rights of marginalised and vulnerable groups, including the LGBT+ community.

Since Rania Amdouni started documenting the case of a violent attack against trans woman human rights defender [Frifra](#) in mid January 2020, she has been targeted with death threats on social media, and an intensified smear campaign carried out online as well as by religious leaders in several mosques in Tunis. The woman human rights defender has been threatened and called a “heretic” in relation to her work promoting the rights of the LGBT+ community. Following her involvement in carrying the coffin of the recently deceased woman human rights defender [Lina Ben Mhenni](#) on 28 January, the threats against Rania Amdouni have intensified. She has been followed by unknown individuals on the streets of Tunis. Fearing for her safety, she was forced to relocate temporarily. The recent targeting has caused her serious psychological distress.

Rania Amdouni has faced smear campaigns in the past, similarly linked to her peaceful work promoting the rights of women and the LGBT+ community in Tunisia.

Front Line Defenders is seriously concerned about the death threats and smear campaign against woman human rights defender Rania Amdouni. It believes that she is being targeted solely as a result of her peaceful and legitimate human rights work.

Front Line Defenders urges the Tunisian authorities to:

1. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the death threats and smear campaign against Rania Amdouni, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Rania Amdouni;
3. Take measures to ensure that public figures, including religious leaders, refrain from making statements or declarations stigmatising the legitimate work of human rights defenders;
4. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Tunisia are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.