

Dear Sir,

I am writing this to express my grave concern for Zine El Abidine Erradi, who was arrested upon his arrival from France at Agadir Airport on April 5. He is a human rights defender with refugee status in France.

He was convicted in 2011 to 1 year prison term, and fined 5.000 dirhams for his participation in the public protest of the February 20 movement in Sidi Ifni on "trumped-up" charges including violence and insults to public officers and destroying public properties. But he did not serve the sentence and the authorities did not issue an arrest warrant until 2014. He fled from Morocco in 2015 to claim asylum in Europe. In July 2017, he obtained his refugee status in France. On April 5, he was travelling to Morocco to visit his family after his father's death, after the French authorities provided him on March 27 with a travel document allowing him to go to Morocco without losing his refugee status in France.

He is now held in Ait Melloul Local Prison, and has been on hunger strike from April 9 to 19 to protest against his arbitrary detention. During the hunger strike he has been hospitalized twice.

I call on you to drop all charges against Zine El Abidine Erradi and immediately and unconditionally release him, as he is held solely for his peaceful work in defense of human rights.

I also call on you to ensure that, while detained, he has access to an independent health professional providing health care in compliance with medical ethics, including the principles of confidentiality, autonomy, and informed consent.

At the same time, I urge you to grant his safe return to France.

Thank you for your prompt attention to the above.

Sincerely yours,