

Head of Government Saad Dine El-Othmani
Palais Royal Touarga, Rabat 10070, Morocco
Fax: +212 53 7771010
Twitter: @Elotmanisaad

Your Excellency,

I am writing to raise concerns that the Moroccan authorities are subjecting Moroccan journalist Omar Radi to legal harassment. On 25 June 2020 and six subsequent occasions in July 2020, he was summoned by the Central Bureau for Judicial Investigations and questioned about phone calls and text messages dating back to 2011 and transfers of funds to his bank account. On 29 July, he was charged and detained and is due to stand trial before the First Instance Court of Casablanca on 22 September 2020. On 22 June Amnesty International had published [a report](#) revealing that he had been targeted for surveillance through spyware on his phone.

Omar Radi is charged with “harming national security” based on an accusation that he received funds from sources linked to foreign intelligence agencies. Amnesty International understands that funds transferred from abroad were actually for research grants in the context of a journalism fellowship and freelance consultancies. Amnesty International therefore has serious concerns that the charge is spurious and indicates an intensification of government harassment. He is also charged with “rape”, based on an accusation by a woman who alleges he assaulted her on 12 July. He denies this, affirming that he had a “consensual sexual relationship” with her. Sexual assault is a serious offence and accusations of such conduct, if genuine, warrant investigation and prosecution before a fair trial. While such accusations must each be considered on their merits and Amnesty International is not well placed to assess their veracity, I note with concern that the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention found in another case that the publisher of an opposition newspaper was accused of rape and arbitrarily detained in what amounted to “judicial harassment attributable to nothing other than his investigative journalism”.

I urge the Moroccan authorities to drop the national security charge against Omar Radi. Please impartially investigate the complaint that the rape charge is based on. Please release him unless they can demonstrate that it is necessary to deprive him of his liberty.

Yours sincerely,