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Morocco

# For a broader solidarity against political repression in Morocco

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**The Moroccan public university and school systems are undergoing a sustained attack on the right of the Moroccan common people to a public, good and free education. This attack is shaped by a document called “National Charter for Education and Training” which was approved by the Moroccan State in 1999 by order of the World Bank and endorsed by the Parliament of the King in March 2000.**

This Charter is supported by another document that began to work out the beginning of school year 2009-2010. It is the “emergency plan”. The aim of this attack, similar to what is happening in many countries subject to the logic of the neoliberal World Bank, is to hit at the rest of the mass, free, knowledge, and public character of the Moroccan University, and to consolidate the bases of a selective and elite university under the grip of the capital and subject to its logic and requirements.

In response to this attack, the students’ movement within its organization, the National Union of Students of Morocco (NUSM), has organised heroic struggles in which the currents of the revolutionary left have played a leading role in recent years, and which have known a brutal suppression by the Moroccan regime. Thus, over the last two years, dozens of militants have been arrested and prosecuted in Fez, Taza, Meknes, Oujda, Tangier, Marrakech, and Agadir.

## **University of Agadir in 2010: The dynamic of mass and democratic struggle**

The University of Agadir, this year, has known continued struggles under the slogan: “All against the emergency plan”; against the conditions of schooling and living of students: the absence of transport, delayed payment of scholarships, the militarization of the campus and the absence of a restaurant for the residents, a lack of teachers, overcrowding, the catastrophic results of examinations with no credibility, the folly in the management, etc. It is a catastrophic situation condemned even by the trade union of the university professors, which fought a two-day strike declaring its solidarity with the students. Struggles reached its mass facets at the university in February and March to demand the abolition of certain items unfair to students during examinations: the right of everyone to pass the “reminded” session, calculating the catch-all point obtained during this session, etc. These struggles, which took place in all the faculties of the university, have been characterized by a broad public participation based on a democratic self-government organization of the struggle to ensure real participation of students in the report and management. They are also defined by a significant participation of the female students - struggles were led by two female students in the Faculties of Law and Science. Thanks to their steadfastness, the students were able to achieve an important part of their demands; particularly in the faculty of Law.

This dynamic, which aroused the hatred of administration and police and made them turn the vicinity of the university to a permanent camp of the various overt and covert forces of repression, restored confidence to the feasibility of the struggle in the ranks of students and credibility to the militants of the NUSM in university.

Thus; immediately after the cessation of study in the Faculty of Law, the administration announced the conduct of examinations on June 2nd, 2010, as if in retaliation against the students. In order to impose the delay of the exams to June 14th so that they can prepare well, the students struggled for more than ten days in late May. This imposed on the administration to delay them to June 7th; which the students saw to be not enough and decided on May 22nd to boycott exams of June 7th if the subjective condition was available; that is to say, if the majority of the students were

convinced. They then organized a march that went through the surroundings of the university to protest against the police siege, which grew into a confrontation with stones with the forces of oppression. The mobilization and surveys to boycott the exams continued for a week.

## **University of Agadir, June 2010: Continued struggle, siege and arrests**

In the morning of June 7th; under an exceptional police siege, students held a mass circle where they decided, in a democratic way, to implement the decision to boycott the exams and left the faculty all at once at 10:00 a.m. This is contrary to the claims of the police, administration and their ilk pretending that the boycott was imposed by some "disruptive" students by force.

In the afternoon; while the students were about to open a panel discussion to continue the decision of boycott, the forces of police repression stormed the campus at the request of the Dean of the Faculty. They were confronted by the students who organised a mass battle which continued till half past seven at night in the neighbourhoods surrounding the faculty. In front of the eyes and ears of administration staff and teachers, the forces of repression booked a very small number of students in the faculty's halls and terraces and obliged them to pass the exams under threats, insults and beatings and against their wish. During these four hours, more than 30 students were arrested before releasing them around midnight and retaining five of them; they are Souad Alhouti, Amine Bassir, Hicham Laaraibi, Abdel-Fattah Ait Belkacem, and Mohamed Mejdouf. The police also brutally stormed the Faculty of Arts which led to the drop of the student Fatima Maggie from the second floor, she suffered from serious fractures.

In this atmosphere of oppression and police siege, the repression foiled the Battle of the boycott by separating the forefront from the masses of students. The acts of chasing students, storming their rooms and arresting them were continued: the arrest of Kamal Boutbagha in the Faculty of Law, Muhammad Chewis, Hassan Ben Zwin (unemployed) and Mbarek Lkadi (a primary school teacher continuing his studies in the Faculty of Law), and Abdel-Aziz Ahdib in the morning of June 8th in front of the Court of Appeal.

The ten detainees have been provided to the justice of the rich on Thursday, June 10th, in a file full of heavy condemnations: "humiliation and violence against public officials and the use of violence against them, resisting the staff of public authority by means of violence and rebellion, damage to the possessions of others, and faultfinding things intended for the public benefit intentionally". Their court ruled that each of Kamal Boutbagha, Lehen Ben Zwin, Muhammad Chwis, and Abdel-Aziz Ahdib are going to be observed in the case of a temporary release; while Souad and others are arrested in prison of Inezgane the ill. The trial was postponed to 14th and 21st June, 2010.

However, both Mohammed Chwis and Abdel-Aziz Ahdib were not released because they are prosecuted also in another file related to the violent events that took place during March and April, 2010 between "the Democratic Basic Direction - Agadir" and "the Amazigh Cultural Movement - Agadir". It has been a constant confrontation, since 2003, that has resulted many detainees and disabled as well as the assassination of two of the DBDs in 2007: Elhasnawi and Assassawi.

The list of the arrested students in Agadir, due to the Battle of the exams boycotting and protection of the campus, is expected to rise by virtue of that complaint / slander that was provided by the Dean of the Faculty of Law to the police. It included an explicit demand to arrest ten students. Four of them were arrested on June 7th and 8th, while the police is still chasing militants to arrest the others. Indeed, on June 14th, both Zahira Boulmsiteri and Saadia Edhaim were arrested in the Campus and will be brought to trial in the case of temporary release on

Wednesday, June 16th, 2010. The number of the prosecuted, so far, is three female students and nine male students.

## **Morocco, June 2010: One month of the bullet of the "New Testament"**

The Moroccan regime is showing an increasing hatred towards the resistance of the students at all universities of Morocco. On June 14th, 2010 after the storming of the University of Marrakech, the police arrested Younes Essalmi and Mohammed Elaarabi Jeddi before they were released temporarily. On June 12th, the militant Abdel- Allah Alilbet was released at the University of Tangier after five months in detention, while there are still two militant students of Marrakech and four of Oujda in jail in reaction to their participation in the struggles of the students in, respectively, 2008 and 2010.

The political situation in its whole is going to further tightening the grip of repression after a bit of softening that witnessed the transition of power to Mohammed VI. All that is happening with the blessing of the parties of the king of all parties, including "the liberal opposition" parties which moved all to the interface site tools to implement the extreme liberal policy established by the kingdom under the guidance of the international financial institutions. Such a policy is passed also through the drag of the trade union leaders to the corridors of "social peace" and the maze of "social dialogue" destroying the gains and morale, and seeking to destroy all forms of the embryonic and unrestrained popular and labour resistance. Only during the month of June, 13 phosphate workers in Khibgua were prosecuted and sentenced to four months in prison, five unemployed militants and trade unionists were arrested; two of them in Figuig will be prosecuted in the case of release on June 29th, and bloody suppression of the masses of the people of Akley in Missouri; arresting and prosecuting 11 citizens struggling to get back the lands wrested from them.

## **For closer cooperation between those unified by struggle against the regime of oppression and tyranny**

The struggles taking place in the Moroccan University, in spite of the heroism shown by the students, are still very modest due to their local, partial and fragmented nature. This is also as a result of breaking the devices of the Moroccan students' union the National Union of Students of Morocco (NUSM) by the police repression in the eighties, the erosion of the democratic traditions in the ranks of the students' movement, and the reverse of the common field work traditions nationally and even sometimes locally between the NUSM's components. But it came to a dangerous level, which only delights the police and those with no insight, by the resolving the political differences via using sharp instruments.

However, the students' movement has taken an important step during this year to overcome this break with the traditions of democracy and militancy of the NUSM when four NUSM trends met at a national and public symposium on March 23rd in Marrakech to discuss issues of factional violence, political arrests and the prospects for the consolidation of students' resistance. A progressive position on the problem of violence is resulted from that meeting. It is the act of no initiation of violence against any students' left trend and the formation of a national follow-up committee. It is a qualitative step that should be fortified and moved forward by seeking to extend its range to include the other militant left currents; whether those who did not participate in the seminar or those that have taken so far an isolationist and even a hostile position that is unjustified from the militant standpoint that truly make the benefits of the students' movement above all.

## For a broader solidarity against political repression in Morocco

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This dynamic, at the level of the organization of the national students' left debate and that of combative struggle of students, is one of the important factors behind this frenetic campaign against the National Union of Students of Morocco in Agadir, Marrakech, and the other universities of Morocco.

The regime of oppression, tyranny and subordination works on the dumping of this dynamic in a sea of bloodshed, repression and arrests. The responsibility of the militant NUSM trends is to make of this situation a lever to strengthen the bridges of the responsible and comrade debate with no courtesy or Prejudice, to radicalize the national struggle of the students on democratic and combative bases that ensure the democratic right for the students in governance and report, and to seek the widest possible integration of this dynamic with the labour and popular struggles; especially on the floor of defence of trade-union and political freedoms and the right for education, employment and organization. This dynamic also places a strong burden on the shoulders of the forces of struggle in Morocco and abroad. It is the responsibility of organizing a wider campaign of solidarity, nationally and internationally, with all the victims of political repression in Morocco and the detainees of the students' movement in Oujda, Marrakech and Agadir in the front.

Let our motto be:

Lift your oppression against the masses of students in Agadir and Marrakech!

Release all the political detainees and those being prosecuted!

Victory for the struggles of the Moroccan common people and their children!

Victory for the struggles of the students' movement!

Freedom for all the political detainees and those being prosecuted in Khribgua, Figuig, Missouri, Oujda, Marrakech, and Agadir!

June 16th, 2010

to express your solidarity:

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to sign the [petition](#)