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Tunisia

# Hunger strike

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### **Radhia Nasraoui, a human rights activist and a lawyer well known for defending prisoners of conscience in Tunisia, has been on hunger strike since June 26, 2002.**

The strike is a protest against restrictions on her right to visit her husband, the Tunisian oppositionist Hama Hammami, who was sentenced to 3 years and 2 months in prison in March 2002 after 4 years spent underground.

The hunger strike has been supported by all the independent associations in Tunis and several of the opposition parties. A campaign of solidarity has also been launched in France. An estimated 1,000 political prisoners are languishing in Tunisia's jails; some of them, like Ali Larādh, the leader of the Islamicist Party, have been in solitary confinement for twelve years.

The 'war against terror' has increased the dictatorship's margin of manoeuvre; since September 11, military tribunals have been set up to try young Tunisians who have been handed over, often in violation of international conventions on human rights, by the authorities in Italy and other 'brother' countries. Nonetheless, while the government whips up hysteria over Islamicist terror, when the first real manifestation of it came (the attack in April on the synagogue in Djerba), they hesitated for more than 10 days before admitting that it had been a terrorist incident. It is a sign of the weakness of the Ben Ali regime and its inability to deal with crisis situations. All the more reason to demonstrate our solidarity with Radhia Nasraoui and demand the right to life, citizenship and liberty in Tunisia.