



JUBILEE CAMPAIGN
ECOSOC Special Consultative Status (2003)
SET MY PEOPLE FREE

United Nations Human Rights Council
Universal Periodic Review – THIRD CYCLE
Submission to the 41st session of the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review
October – November 2022

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

A Vital Voice for Those Suffering in Silence
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**United Nations Human Rights Council
Universal Periodic Review of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria**

I. Background

1. **Jubilee Campaign**, in special consultative status with ECOSOC, submits this analysis of religious freedom and human rights in the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria as a contribution to the Universal Periodic Review.
2. **Set My People Free** is a network of individuals, churches and organizations working for the freedom of converts from Islam to live and practice their new faith, and to experience equality and justice in their home countries.

II. Scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies.

3. Algeria has ratified the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict; the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children child prostitution and child pornography; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
4. Algeria has not ratified the Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture; the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming to the abolition of the death penalty; the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Interstate communication procedure under the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

Recommendation(s)

We make urge the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to:

5. Ratify the Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture; the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming to the abolition of the death penalty; the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Interstate communication procedure under the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

III. Violations of international human rights obligations, considering applicable international humanitarian law

A. Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion

6. Article 2 of Algeria's Constitution of 2020 identifies Islam as the official national religion, and Article 10 prohibits institutions from "infringing the Islamic morals". However, Article 51 stipulates that Algerian citizens are guaranteed "freedom of conscience and freedom of opinion", as well as "freedom of worship".¹ Regrettably, the constitutional referendum passed in 2020 removed "freedom of conscience".
7. Algeria's Penal Code includes a few provisions which criminalize manifestations of Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). Article 144(2) states that anyone who "offends the prophet and the messengers of God or disparages the dogma or precepts of Islam, whether in writing, drawing, statement or any other medium" may be punished with an imprisonment term ranging from three to five years and a fine ranging from 50,000 dinars (\approx USD \$350) to 100,000 dinars (\approx USD \$710).²
8. Algerian Ordinance 06-03 of February 2006 criminalizes "printing, storing or distributing materials intended to convert Muslims away from Islam".³
9. In August 2021, Tunisian authorities detained Algerian Christian man Suleiman Bouhafs, after which he disappeared for four days and subsequently reappeared in Algiers, the capital of Algeria. It is purported that Tunisian and Algerian authorities cooperated to repatriate Bouhafs. Civil society actors have condemned the return of Bouhafs, saying it has breached Tunisia's international law commitment to non-refoulement. Authorities had originally arrested Bouhafs in Algeria 2016 for some Facebook posts he made criticizing Islam and charged him with "harming the image of the Prophet" and "offending Islam", for which he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. Having received a presidential pardon in 2018, however, Bouhafs fled to Tunisia. Now, after being repatriated to Algeria, Bouhafs is facing new charges including blasphemy under Penal Code Article 144(2).⁴
10. In June 2021, when Algerian authorities arbitrarily closed Oran city's Oratoire Church and its bookstore, they also arrested Pastor Rachid Seighir and bookstore salesman Nouh Hamini. The authorities charged the two men with proselytism and "distributing publications or any other propaganda undermining the faith of a Muslim" for which they were each sentenced to two years in prison and a fine of 500,000 dinars (\approx USD \$3,500). On appeal, the

¹ [Algeria], [Algeria's Constitution of 2020](#).

² [Algeria] [Republique Algerienne Democratique et Populaire](#) *Presidence de la Republique. Code Penal*, 2009.

³ International Institute for Religious Freedom, "[Algeria: Christian charged with proselytism risks 5 years in prison](#)", 23 June 2017.

⁴ Jubilee Campaign, [Suleiman Bouhafs](#).

court granted Seighir and Hamini suspended sentences of one year's imprisonment and a reduced fine of 200,000 dinars (≈ USD \$1500). In late September 2021, Seighir attempted to appeal for a complete acquittal, but the regional court of appeals upheld his suspended sentence.⁵

11. In June 2021, the Algerian National Committee for the Liberation of Prisoners (CNLD) revealed that, in total, 214 prisoners of conscience are detained in 33 of the nation's governorates, and that 144 of these prisoners had been arrested just since the beginning of May 2021.⁶
12. In mid-April 2021, authorities arrested Christian convert Foudhil Bahloul and three of his close friends before searching his home and seizing possessions without warrant; the items and texts that were confiscated were related to his Christian faith. Algerian authorities held Bahloul's first hearing on 30 June 2021 without legal counsel and charged him with distributing Bibles in order to "spread poisonous ideas to the unemployed youth" which "destabilized their faith in Islam", and sentenced Bahloul to six months' imprisonment and a fine of 100,000 dinars (≈ USD \$710). In December 2021, Bahloul's appeal was rejected.⁷
13. In April 2021, Algerian authorities sentenced Islamic expert Said Djabelkheir to three years' imprisonment on charges of blasphemy for three Facebook posts he made in January 2020 in which he claimed some Quranic verses were myths and compared Eid al-Adha with Berber New Year. Djabelkheir's charges included "offending the Prophet of Islam", and "denigrating the dogma or precepts of Islam".⁸
14. In January 2021, Algerian authorities arrested Hamid Soudad for sharing a Facebook post in 2018 depicting a cartoon of Muhammad. Officers immediately interrogated Soudad and then permitted him to briefly return home, however, he was re-summoned to the local prison where he slept overnight. The following day, having neither provided access to a lawyer nor a trial, a court in Arzew charged Soudad with "insulting the Prophet of Islam" and imposed upon him the maximum sentence of five years in prison under Penal Code article 144-2. In March 2021, Oran City Court upheld Soudad's sentence. Soudad's lawyer expressed that he believed Soudad was being targeted specifically for his faith, as the court broke precedent by exercising the maximum punishment of five years' imprisonment for Soudad's alleged circulation of a 'blasphemous' cartoon, when usually only the original creator of such content faces those charges. Moreover, the court judgement makes multiple references to Soudad's religious affiliation and conversion to Christianity.⁹

⁵ Jubilee Campaign, [Rachid Seighir](#).

⁶ Majalat, ["CNLD: Algeria has more than 210 prisoners of conscience"](#), 8 June 2021.

⁷ Jubilee Campaign, [Foudhil Bahloul](#).

⁸ Amnesty International, ["Algeria: Islamic scholar sentenced to three-year prison term for 'offending Islam'"](#), 22 April 2021.

⁹ Jubilee Campaign, [Hamid Soudad](#).

15. In December 2020, a court in Amizour, Béjaïa province, sentenced a Copt convert named Abdelghani Mameri to six months' imprisonment and a fine of 100,000 dinars (≈ USD \$710) for his work promoting the Orthodox Church; his charges were “offending the Prophet and showing disrespect to religious principles”. During the trial, radical Muslims supported harsh penalties against the ‘apostate’, the Prosecutor of the Republic demanded a two-year prison term and 200,000 dinar fine (≈ USD \$1500) for Mameri, and even Mameri’s defense lawyer encouraged his client to recant his faith.¹⁰
16. Also in December 2020, the same court in Amizour sentenced another Coptic convert Mabrouk to three years’ imprisonment and a fine of 50,000 dinars (≈ USD \$350) for the same charges as Mameri; this lengthy prison term surpassed the Prosecutor of the Republic’s demands of six months’ imprisonment.¹¹
17. Despite the above numerous cases of individuals being detained and imprisoned for their faith or expressions about faith, Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune refused to address questions regarding prisoners of conscience during a presidential address in August 2021, stating simply that “dozens of people, who were convicted by the courts for imprisonment or who are under judicial prosecution, were accused of defamation”.¹²
18. In July 2020, it was reported that authorities were collecting information regarding teachers’ religious affiliations in Tizi Ouzou province.¹³
19. Since 2019, Algerian authorities have arbitrarily shut down thirteen Protestant Churches and have maintained their closures on arbitrary grounds, citing that they do not have licenses and permits to operate or that they have failed to meet safety regulations. On the contrary, churches have repeatedly applied for operation licenses, but the National Commission for Non-Muslim Religious Groups – which is tasked with review and approve permits in a timely manner – has not issued a single license since its inception. Therefore, churches have been relegated to operating illegally due to inaction by the Commission rather than lack of effort on the churches’ part. Moreover, numerous religious leaders have reported renovating their church buildings in accordance with health and safety regulations (i.e., installing extra fire exits and extinguishers; eliminating electric cables) but have still been prohibited from reopening premises to worshippers.¹⁴
20. In May 2021, the Algerian government returned a previously confiscated church-owned building in Mostaganem to the Protestant Church (EPA). The

¹⁰ Kamel Abderrahmani, [“The Algerian state, Sunni Islam and violations of religious freedom”](#), *Asia News*, 18 December 2020. ; International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF), [“Two Kabyl Christians sentenced to heavy prison terms”](#), 8 January 2021.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Ashraq Al-Awsat, [“Tebboune Says No ‘Prisoners of Conscience’ in Algeria”](#), 10 August 2021.

¹³ International Christian Concern, [“Algeria Loosens COVID Restrictions but Continues to Restrict Religious Freedom”](#), 13 August 2020.

¹⁴ Jubilee Campaign, [Rejoinder from Jubilee Campaign to Response of the Government of Algeria to allegations concerning the closure of Protestant churches and places of worship](#), 8 June 2021.

EPA had been campaigning for the return of their appropriated building for over a decade, as it was confiscated and converted into a health clinic for years.¹⁵

21. In July 2021, the Algerian government closed an additional three Protestant churches in Oran, bringing the total number of shuttered churches to sixteen.¹⁶
22. In early February 2022, church members and leaders in Tizi Ouzou province's Ait Atteli village reported that authorities have filed legal cases against a local church pastor and his father, who owns the land that the church rests on, in attempts to have the church closed down.¹⁷
23. The Algerian government continues to persecute the minority Ahmadiyya Muslim continue. In October 2020, a Constantine court sentenced a group of Ahmadi Muslims to two-year prison terms on charges of unlawful assembly as they gathered to worship in an unregistered location.¹⁸
24. In November 2020 a Tizi Ouzou court summoned a group of 31 Ahmadiyya Muslims on charges of “distribution of leaflets with the aim of harming the national interest”; “occupation of a building for practicing worship in a secret manner without authorization”; “collecting funds and donations without authorization”; and “preaching inside a building without authorization and without approval”.¹⁹ In December, four of these individuals were sentenced to two months’ imprisonment each and fines of 20,000 dinars (≈ USD \$150), and the remaining 27 were released.²⁰
25. USCIRF reported that “in December [2020], a court in Khenchela handed down a six-month prison sentence and 20,000-dinar (roughly \$150 USD) fine for the leader of a group of Ahmadis”.²¹

Recommendation(s)

We urge the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria to:

26. Abolish Penal Code Article 144(2) which criminalizes acts of alleged blasphemy and which has been used to detain faith minorities and converts for their expressions or manifestations of belief;
27. Cease the practice of imprisoning faith minorities on charges of blasphemy and release unconditionally and with immediate effect all religious prisoners of conscience in Algeria;

¹⁵ Middle East Concern, [“Algeria: Historic church building returned to the EPA”](#), 26 May 2021.

¹⁶ Middle East Concern, [“Algeria: More churches sealed by government”](#), 13 July 2021.

¹⁷ Middle East Concern, [“Algeria: Another church closure threatened”](#), 4 February 2022.

¹⁸ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom [USCIRF], [Factsheet: Ahmadiyya Muslims](#), October 2021.

¹⁹ Kouceila Tighilt, [“Le procès de 31 Ahmadis reporté au 15 décembre”](#), *Liberté Algérie*, 26 November 2020.

²⁰ United States Department of State, [Algeria 2020 International Religious Freedom Report](#), 12 May 2021.

²¹ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom [USCIRF], [Factsheet: Ahmadiyya Muslims](#), October 2021.

28. Repeal or otherwise revise Ordinance 06-03 governing non-Muslim worship, as it criminalizes peaceful proselytism and poses obstacles for the registration of religious groups and their applications for licenses to build houses of worship;
29. Cease the practice of shutting down non-Muslim houses of worship on arbitrary grounds and maintaining their closures, as they have consistently met safety regulations and have applied for operation licenses but are relegated to operating ‘illegally’ due to inaction by the National Commission for Non-Muslim Religious Groups;
30. Reopen with immediate effect the sixteen Protestant churches that remain closed.

B. Freedom of Expression, Assembly, and Speech.

31. In April 2020, the Algerian government introduced an amendment to the Penal Code which criminalizes spreading “false information” with imprisonment sentences up to three years and fines of up to 300,000 dinars (\approx USD \$2100).²²
32. In December 2020, the government issued a presidential decree that required Algerian media websites to register under a .dz domain on the internet, which provides the government the ability to monitor and censor the content posted on these sites.²³
33. The Algerian government continues to crack down on members of multiple opposition movements. These include the Hirak protest movement which started in 2019 in objection of then-President Abdelaziz Bouteflika’s possible fifth presidential term, and which evolved into a pro-democracy movement²⁴; the Barakat Movement, and the Al-Muwatana “Citizens’ Democracy” Movement. The below cases of political prisoners of conscience are not a comprehensive list, but are the most noteworthy and high-profile current cases.
34. In September 2021, renowned journalist Mohamed Mouloudj was arrested and placed in pre-trial detention on charges of “spreading false news”, “harming national unity”, and “belonging to a terrorist group”. Mouloudi reported for *Liberte Daily*, covering the Hirak movement and another self-determination movement of the region of Kabylie.²⁵
35. In August 2021, journalist Rabah Karèche was sentenced to one year in prison for his coverage of the Hirak movement, though his sentence was later

²² Global Voices Mena, [“Algerians’ speech freedoms strained by media laws passed under COVID-19 pretext”](#), 8 April 2021.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Eric Goldstein, [“Algeria’s Hirak Protest Movement Marks Second Anniversary”](#), *Human Rights Watch*, 23 February 2021.

²⁵ Peoples Dispatch, [“Algerian journalist Mohamed Moulouj placed in pre-trial detention on terrorism charges”](#), 16 September 2021.

suspended to six months' imprisonment. Karèche served his commuted sentence in full before he was released in October 2021.²⁶

36. In July 2021, Algerian authorities raided the home of and arrested renowned Hirak movement leader Fethi Ghares. In January 2022, Ghares was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and received a fine of 200,000 dinars (≈ USD \$1500) for “dissemination to the public of publications that may harm the national interest” and “dissemination of information which could undermine national unity”.²⁷
37. In June 2021, Hirak activist, human rights advocate, and member of the National Committee for the Liberation of Detainees (CNLD), Fatiha Briki, was arrested. There has been no news regarding Briki's case since her detention.²⁸
38. In May 2021, the Algerian National Committee for the Liberation of Detainees (CNLD) recorded no fewer than 60 Hirak activists in prison, and Amnesty International noted that Algerian authorities were routinely using excessive force against protesters aligned with the movement.²⁹
39. In May 2021, Hirak member and founder of Barakat Movement and Al-Miwatana Movement, Amira Bouraoui, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for “inciting an unarmed gathering”, “offending Islam”, “offending the President”, “publishing content which may harm national unity”, and “publication of fake news that may harm safety and public order”.³⁰ Authorities released Bouraoui after eleven days in custody and subsequently placed her under strict “judicial supervision”.³¹
40. Also in May 2021, lawyer Abderraouf Arslane – who legally represented Hirak activists – was arrested on charges of “participation in a terrorist organization” and “spreading false news that may undermine security and public order”. As of November 2021, Arslane remained in prison and his requests for provisional release were rejected.³²
41. In December 2020, Hirak movement figure Karim Tabbou, one of the leading figures of the movement's protests against former President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's fifth term, was sentenced to one year in prison for “compromising national security”. Tabbou was officially arrested in April 2021, but his sentence was annulled in October 2021.³³

²⁶ Committee to Protect Journalists, [“Algerian journalist Rabah Karèche sentenced to 1 year in prison on false news and anti-state charges”](#), 12 August 2021. ; Morocco Latest News, [“Algeria: journalist Rabah Karèche regains his freedom after 6 months in prison”](#), 19 October 2021.

²⁷ Peoples Dispatch, [“Algeria sentences leftist opposition leader Fethi Ghares to two years in prison”](#), 10 January 2022.

²⁸ Peoples Dispatch, [“Fatiha Briki is the latest Algerian human rights activist under detention”](#), 23 June 2021.

²⁹ Amnesty International, [“Algeria: Stop using unlawful force against peaceful protesters”](#), 7 May 2021.

³⁰ Alarabiya News, [“Algerian activist Bouraoui sentenced to two years in jail”](#), 4 May 2021.

³¹ United States Department of State, [Algeria 2020 Human Rights Report](#), 30 March 2021.

³² Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, [“Algeria: Ongoing pre-trial detention of Mr. Abderraouf Arslane”](#), 9 November 2021.

³³ Middle East Monitor [MEM], [“Algeria annuls prison terms for prominent Hirak member”](#), 19 October 2021. ; France24, [“Algeria detains leading opposition figure Karim Tabbou”](#), 29 April 2021.

42. In September 2020, Algerian authorities raided the home of Hirak activist Yacine Mebarki, where they found an old copy of the Quran with some pages ripped out. Mebarki was swiftly arrested and in December 2020 was sentenced to 10 years in prison on multiple charges, including “inciting atheism”, “offending Islam”, “inciting discrimination and hatred”, and “undermining national unity”. Mebarki additionally received a hefty fine of 10 million dinars (\approx USD \$71,000).³⁴
43. In August 2020, “the Poet of Hirak”, Mohamed Tadjadit, was arrested for his participation in the movement and his vocally anti-government poetry, and is facing ten charges, including “publication that may undermine national unity”, “injury to the person of the president”, “undermining the security and unity of the nation”, and “exposing the lives of others to danger by inciting a gathering during the period of [COVID-19] confinement”.³⁵ In January, Tadjadit and two other Hirak activists went on a hunger strike to protest their imprisonment, and they were eventually hospitalized in January 2021.³⁶
44. In June 2020, journalist Abdelkarim Zeghileche, who operated pro-Hirak *Radio Sarbacane*, was charged with “undermining national unity” and “subverting the personality of the president” and originally sentenced to two years in prison, which was later commuted to one year’s imprisonment. Though he was released after serving his sentence, in January 2022 it was reported that another arrest warrant had been placed on Zeghileche.³⁷
45. In April 2020, Hirak activist Walid Kechida was arrested in Setif province for posting satirical memes on his Facebook account; in January 2021, a court sentenced Kechida to three years’ imprisonment on charges of “violation of the Constitution”, “insult to the President of the Republic”, and “offending the precepts of Islam”.³⁸
46. In March 2020, Reporters Without Borders journalist Khaled Drareni was arrested for his coverage of anti-government Hirak movement protests. By mid-September 2020, Drareni was sentenced to two years’ imprisonment for “inciting an unarmed gathering” and “endangering national unity”, though he received a presidential pardon in February 2021 and was released.³⁹

Recommendation(s)

We urge the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria to:

³⁴ Alarabiya News, [“Algeria hands activist Yacine Mebarki 10 years jail for ‘inciting atheism’: NGO”](#), 8 October 2020.

³⁵ Freemuse, [“Algeria: Poet Arrested; Facing 10 Charges”](#), 9 September 2020.

³⁶ Alarabiya News, [“Three Algerian activists on hunger strike hospitalized in prison protest”](#), 6 January 2021.

³⁷ Peoples Dispatch, [“Algerian court reduces journalist Abdelkarim Zeghileche’s prison sentence to one year”](#), 9 November 2020. ; Pipa News, [“Constantine: Abdelkrim Zehileche placed under arrest warrant”](#), 25 January 2022.

³⁸ France24, [“Algerian jailed for 3 years for political protest memes”](#), 4 January 2021.

³⁹ France24, [“Algerian journalist Khaled Drareni jailed for two years on appeal”](#), 15 September 2020. ; Kizzi Asala, [“Freed Algerian Journalist Khaled Drareni Vows to Keep Fighting”](#), *Africa News*, 25 February 2021.

47. Repeal legislations that pose restrictions on and outright criminalize the exercise of free speech and expression, including the April 2020 Penal Code Amendment; the December 2020 presidential decree; and Penal Code Articles 75, 79, 96, 100, and 144, which – through their vague language prohibiting “demoralizing the army”, “undermining the integrity of the nation”, “harming national interest”, “incitement to unarmed gathering”, and “insulting public officials” – are used to harshly punish individuals who criticize the government;⁴⁰
48. Cease the practice of arresting and imprisoning political activists, and release all such prisoners of conscience unconditionally and with immediate effect.

C. Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Violence against Women (VAW), & Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

49. Algeria exhibits concerningly high rates of femicide:

In January 2021, a man beat his 45-year-old wife Warda Hafadh in the head with a hammer and then stabbed her chest five times in front of their daughter. The man had been physically abusing her for some 25 years. Hafadh died as a result of the vicious attack. ⁴¹	In January 2021, a man murdered his 37-year-old wife, TV4 journalist and mother of two, Tinhinane Lacey; individuals that knew Lacey explained that in the months preceding the incident, she displayed signs of “unease” and “moral distress” which they attributed to marital problems.	In February 2021, a man murdered his 17-year-old daughter, Tizi Ouzou high school student Kenza Sadet, while she was in the bathroom. He then beheaded her, dismembered her body, and scattered her body parts in a nearby forest.	In February 2021 in Annaba, a man slit the throat of and killed his 38-year-old wife, Amel Belmane, who was a mother of three.
In March 2021 in Bejaïa, a man physically tortured and murdered his sister, 44-year-old Rahima Ibazizine, and his 5-year-old niece Manel Benikhlef. It is believed he wanted to sacrifice the two for a ritual.	In May 2021 in Oran, a man killed his wife Salih Ben Bouziane by beating her with a hammer before burying her body in the house garden.	In May 2021 in Batna, a man stabbed his 50-year-old wife Hakima Ouahdi to death; she was a mother of five.	In May 2021 in Oum El Bouaghi, a man killed his 26-year-old disabled orphan sister Hadjira Haddal by hitting her in the head with a wooden floor panel.
In June 2021 in Tlemcen, a man murdered his 39-year-old sister Amaria Ben Youcef.	In June 2021 in Biskra, a man shot and killed his 40-year-old wife, Aïcha Kherchouch, who was a mother of seven children including a newborn baby. The perpetrator then committed suicide.	In July 2021 in Chlef, a man murdered his 40-year-old wife Lila Benamani, who was a mother of four.	In July 2021 in Tipaza, a man murdered his 72-year-old mother Fatiha Berokia, set the home on fire, and then murdered his aunt.
In July 2021 in Batna, a man severely burned his 37-year-old pregnant wife, Aloua Samra; after one month in hospital, Batna and her unborn baby passed away.	In August 2021 in Skikda, a man slit the throat of his 49-year-old wife Boudhafa Tefaha, killing her.	In August 2021 in Chlef, a man murdered his 42-year-old ex-wife Meriem Houhamdi	In September 2021 in Jijel, a man shot and killed his 39-year-old wife Soulef Othmani, his 12-year-old daughter Lydia, and his 9-year-old daughter Nada. The perpetrator was a police officer.

⁴⁰ Amnesty International, “[Suppressing Free Speech and Assembly: The Targeting of Hirak Activists in Algeria](#)”, 22 February 2021. ; [Algeria] *Republique Algérienne Démocratique et Populaire* *Présidence de la République*, *Code Penal*, 2009.

⁴¹ Féminicides Algérie, [Liste Féminicides 2021](#).

In September 2021 in Biskra, a man murdered his 25-year-old wife Himeur Fatima in front of the couple's two children.	In October 2021 in Sétif, a man murdered his 60-year-old mother Hadda Hadad and his 35-year-old sister Diamila.	In October 2021 in Médéa, a man stabbed and killed his wife Aïcha Midoun, who was a mother of four.	In October 2021 in Bouira, a man murdered his 43-year-old wife Lynda Belharet, who was a mother.
In October 2021 in Skikda, a man stabbed and killed his 38-year-old pregnant wife Nawel Yahy before committing suicide.	In October 2021 in Tizi Ouzou, a man murdered his wife, 37-year-old Dehbia Cherifi, who had wanted a divorce.	In November 2021 in Khenchla, a man murdered his 37-year-old wife Hedda Akaba, who he had been abusing for years.	In November 2021 in Tizi Ouzou, a man set fire to the home of his 32-year-old sister Lamia Hamdous and 27-year-old sister Diamila, burning them alive. The perpetrator prevented neighbors from rescuing the women. The mother survived.
In November 2021 in Biskra, a man murdered his 5-year-old daughter Mayssem Bouazizi as he was angered over his wife's request for divorce.	In November 2021 in Oum El Bouaghi, a deaf-mute man murdered his 47-year-old wife Rachida Chouaf, who was also deaf-mute. He had been abusing her for years.	In December 2021 in Skikda, a man hammered to death his 74-year-old mother Rahima Saad Aissous.	In January 2022 in Oum El Bouaghi, a man murdered his neighbor Hafida Mansouri after she refused to marry him. ⁴²

50. The above cases are only those in which the victims' full names were disclosed. An additional twelve cases of femicide occurred in 2021 to unnamed women.

51. The existing 2015 Algerian legislation prohibiting violence against women criminalizes domestic violence against women with fines and imprisonment terms; however, it only applies to incidents of domestic violence between spouses and ex-spouses living in the same or separate residences, and it only covers physical violence. Therefore, this law leaves many women unprotected, as a substantial portion of the above incidents of femicide do not involve the victims' spouses but other male relatives. Moreover, Article 266 of the Penal Code permits perpetrators to receive commuted sentences should the victims pardon them; as such, many family members pressure the victims to pardon the attacker for the sake of saving face.⁴³

Recommendation(s)

We urge the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to:

52. Amend and diversify existing legislation prohibiting violence against women by eliminating spousal requirements for prosecution of perpetrators, expanding the criminalization of domestic violence to include all familial and non-familial perpetrators, and considering the social pressure women face to pardon their attackers.

⁴² Féminicides Algérie, *Liste Féminicides 2022*.

⁴³ Dalia Ghanem, "Algeria: War against women", *Middle East Institute*, 8 February 2021.