

Advocacy dossier

Ayachi Hammami

العياشي الهمامي

Imprisoned (serving sentence) **Tunisia**

Ayachi Hammami is a lawyer who defended 57 judges dismissed by presidential decree in 2022. Charged in May 2023 in the Conspiracy Case, in which he was defence counsel, he was sentenced to five years in prison and arrested on 2 December 2025 to serve the sentence, which became final in September 2026.

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The case at a glance

Ayachi Hammami is a lawyer who defended 57 judges dismissed by presidential decree in 2022. Charged in May 2023 in the Conspiracy Case, in which he was defence counsel, he was sentenced to five years in prison and arrested on 2 December 2025 to serve the sentence, which became final in September 2026.

Status **Imprisoned (serving sentence)**	Arrested **2 Dec 2025**	Country **Tunisia**

Sentence Five years in prison plus two years of administrative supervision, reduced from eight years at first instance.

Charges Membership of a terrorist organisation (Conspiracy Case, conviction final)
Failure to report terrorist offences (dropped on appeal)
Offences under Decree-Law 54 over public statements (two separate cases, outcome unknown)

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Release Ayachi Hammami immediately and unconditionally.

02 Drop all charges related to the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights.

03 Ensure unrestricted access to legal counsel, family, and adequate medical care while in detention.

04 Provide Ayachi Hammami with immediate, independent medical evaluation and the full treatment that condition requires, including transfer to an independent civilian hospital if necessary.

05 Immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Ayachi Hammami and on any family members affected by the same order.

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Documented violations

Each violation and the international standard it breaks.

Arbitrary detention International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9

Criminalisation of solidarity International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 21, 22
UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Article 5

Denial of legal counsel International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14(3)

Denial of medical care UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), Rules 24 to 27

Inhumane detention conditions International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 10
UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules)

Judicial harassment UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Articles 9, 12

Threats and intimidation UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Article 12

Travel ban International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 12

Unfair trial International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14

03

How the case unfolded

2020

Context

Serves as Minister of Human Rights

He served as Minister of Human Rights in the 2020 government, working on transitional justice.

June 2022

Defender activity

Becomes spokesperson for dismissed judges

Hammemi became spokesperson for the committee defending 57 magistrates arbitrarily dismissed by presidential decree, a role that exposed him to sustained harassment.

10 January 2023

Interrogation

Questioned under Decree-Law 54

An investigating judge questioned him under Decree-Law 54 after a complaint by the Minister of Justice over radio remarks about the dismissed judges. He was left at liberty.

May 2023

Charge filed

Charged in 'conspiracy case'

While acting as defence counsel in the politically motivated Conspiracy Case, Hammami was added as a suspect and charged with failing to report a terrorist organisation and belonging to one.

May 2023

Travel ban imposed

Travel ban and public-appearance ban imposed

The investigating judge imposed a travel ban and prohibited Ayachi from appearing in public, severely restricting his professional and advocacy work.

19 April 2025

Conviction

Convicted at first instance

Ayachi was convicted and sentenced to eight years in prison at first instance.

28 November 2025

Appeal: sentence reduced

Sentence reduced on appeal to five years

The Tunis Court of Appeal dropped the failure to report count and reduced the sentence to five years in prison plus two years of administrative supervision.

2 December 2025

Arrest

Arrested at home to enforce his five-year sentence

Police arrested Hammemi at his home to enforce the five-year prison sentence imposed in the conspiracy case.

2 December 2025

Hunger strike begins

Begins hunger strike

Hammemi initiated a hunger strike on the day of his arrest to protest the systematic criminalisation of opposition voices and politically motivated trials.

16 December 2025

Context

International legal groups condemn his detention

Twenty-one international legal organisations condemned his detention and noted a second Decree-Law 54 case against him over a video about the hunger strike of Jaouhar Ben Mbarek.

12 January 2026

Access to counsel denied

Lawyers denied access

Prison authorities arbitrarily denied his lawyers' requests to visit, further restricting his right to legal counsel.

15 January 2026

Hunger strike ends

Ends 43-day hunger strike

Hammami announced the end of his 43-day hunger strike while held at Mornaguia prison.

3 September 2026

Final judgment

Court of Cassation makes the conviction final

The Court of Cassation upheld the convictions in the conspiracy case. The judgment is final.

18 September 2026

Hunger strike begins

Begins hunger strike in solidarity with a detained flotilla activist

In a statement dated 18 September 2026 and issued from Mornaguia prison, Hammami announced a hunger strike in solidarity with Wael Naouar, a detained member of the Tunisian coordination of the Soumoud Flotilla, who had been on hunger strike for more than a month.

24 September 2026

Punitive transfer

Moved from Mornaguia to Monastir prison, far from his family

His defence team announced on 24 September 2026 that he had been moved from Mornaguia prison to Monastir prison, far from his family, a week after he began a hunger strike in solidarity with Wael Naouar. The defence called the transfer arbitrary and a reprisal, and Amnesty International described it as an arbitrary and punitive measure.

25 September 2026

Hunger strike ends

Ends solidarity hunger strike and calls for a monthly one-day strike

Speaking from Monastir prison, Hammami ended his hunger strike after Wael Naouar suspended his own. He asked detainees he described as political prisoners to observe a one-day hunger strike on the first Tuesday of each month, and their families to resume monthly solidarity gatherings on that day.

October 2026

Detention conditions and health

Restrictions on books, newspapers and family letters in Monastir prison

Amnesty International reported that detained defendants in the conspiracy case faced limits on books, newspapers and correspondence and visits behind a glass partition. His sister said on 20 October 2026 that his access to books, newspapers and family mail had been restricted, and on 30 October that books and letters had been delivered; the Tunisian League for Human Rights said one letter from his daughter sent on 19 July took more than three months to reach him.

October 2026

Other act

Amnesty International features his case in Write for Rights 2026

Amnesty International made his case part of its Write for Rights 2026 campaign and called for his immediate and unconditional release. Its urgent action of 21 October 2026 described his transfer to Monastir prison as an arbitrary and punitive measure.

3 November 2026

Other act

Solidarity gathering outside Monastir prison

Sections of the Tunisian League for Human Rights in Monastir, Sousse, Mahdia and Kairouan held a gathering outside Monastir civil prison to demand his release and an end to the restrictions placed on him, and to object to his transfer far from his family.

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The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: Ayachi Hammami remains in Monastir prison, where he was transferred from Mornaguia on 24 September 2026, serving a five-year sentence that the Court of Cassation made final on 3 September 2026. He observes a one-day hunger strike on the first Tuesday of each month, and Amnesty International has featured his case in Write for Rights 2026. Chaima Issa, a co-defendant in the same case, was also arrested to serve her sentence, and the lawyer Ahmed Souab, who served on the defence team in the case, was himself prosecuted in 2025.

Background and Work

Ayachi Hammami is a lawyer who has built his career representing individuals in politically sensitive and human rights cases. He has consistently challenged abuses of power and advocated for civil liberties, judicial independence, and the rule of law in Tunisia.

In June 2022, Hammami became spokesperson for the committee defending 57 magistrates dismissed by presidential decree. This role placed him at the centre of efforts to uphold judicial independence in Tunisia, a position that exposed him to sustained harassment and reprisals from the authorities.

In a video released shortly before his arrest, Hammami denounced what he called a "purely political decision" and announced the immediate start of a hunger strike. He described a deliberate strategy aimed at instilling fear, stigmatising dissent, and manufacturing "internal enemies" to silence and neutralise critical voices in the country.

The Arrest and Criminalisation of His Work

Hammami began his involvement in the Conspiracy Case as legal counsel for defendants. In May 2023, however, he was added to the list of suspects and charged, effectively criminalising his professional work.

Following the charges, authorities imposed a travel ban and limitations on his public engagement, constraining both his professional activities as a lawyer and his human rights advocacy.

On 2 December 2025, Hammami was arrested at home to serve his sentence. The arrest marked a clear escalation connected to his work defending dismissed judges and advocating for human rights in Tunisia.

Legal Proceedings

Hammami has been targeted in multiple judicial proceedings. In the Conspiracy Case, the Tunis court of first instance sentenced him on 19 April 2025 to eight years in prison: five years for membership of a terrorist organisation and three for failing to report terrorist offences. On 28 November 2025 the Court of Appeal dropped the failure to report count and sentenced him to five years in prison and two years of administrative supervision. On 3 September 2026 the Court of Cassation upheld the conviction, making it final.

He also faces two separate cases under Decree-Law 54 on information and communication systems. The first, opened in January 2023 after a complaint by the Minister of Justice, concerns radio remarks criticising her failure to comply with court orders

reinstating judges dismissed in 2022. The second concerns a video about the hunger strike of Jaouhar Ben Mbarek. No verdict has been reported in either case. Despite the reduction, the sentence remains severe and disproportionate.

The case raises serious concerns about judicial independence, the criminalisation of legal defence work, and violations of fair trial guarantees in Tunisia.

Detention Conditions and Health

On 12 January 2026, Hammami's family reported that prison authorities had arbitrarily denied his lawyers' requests to visit him, further restricting his right to legal counsel.

In protest of his detention and conviction, Hammami initiated a hunger strike on 2 December 2025, the day of his arrest. The strike lasted 43 days and ended on 15 January 2026.

On 18 September 2026 he began a hunger strike in solidarity with Wael Naouar, a detained member of the Soumoud Flotilla. On 24 September 2026 his defence team announced that he had been moved from Mornaguia prison to Monastir prison, far from his family; it called the transfer a reprisal, and Amnesty International described it as arbitrary and punitive. He ended the strike on 25 September and has since observed a one-day hunger strike on the first Tuesday of each month. His family has described about five hours of travel for a visit of roughly ten minutes, and in October 2026 his access to books, newspapers and family letters was restricted.

Violations of Fair Trial and International Law

Hammami's prosecution exemplifies the troubling trend of targeting lawyers for performing their professional duties, in violation of international standards protecting legal independence and the right to defence.

The case involves the conflation of roles between lawyer and accused, disproportionate sentencing, and apparent retaliation for his human rights advocacy, all of which undermine the right to a fair and impartial trial.

The restrictions on access to legal counsel, arbitrary detention, and treatment in prison contravene Article 9, 14, and 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the UN Minimum Standards for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), and the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers.

Tunisia has obligations under the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders to protect individuals who peacefully defend human rights. Hammami's arrest and detention clearly violate these obligations and contribute to an atmosphere of intimidation against lawyers and human rights defenders in the country.

Latest updates on this case Scan the code or visit: https://humena.org/defenders/ayachi-hammemi/

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