

ADVOCACY DOSSIER

ISMAIL LGHAZAOUI

إسماعيل الغزاوي

At liberty **Morocco**

Agricultural engineer and pro-Palestine advocate imprisoned for two months for social-media posts supporting boycotts of companies linked to Israel. Released February 2025 after sentence reduction on appeal.

HuMENA.

Prepared by HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement · 8 November 2026

Case reference HM-MA-2026-003

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THE CASE AT A GLANCE

Agricultural engineer and pro-Palestine advocate imprisoned for two months for social-media posts supporting boycotts of companies linked to Israel. Released February 2025 after sentence reduction on appeal.

STATUS	**At liberty**
ARRESTED	**19 Nov 2024**
COUNTRY	**Morocco**
SENTENCE	**Four months in prison (two months enforced, two months suspended) and a fine of 5,000 Moroccan dirhams (approximately €478).**
CHARGES	**Inciting to commit felonies and misdemeanors by electronic means**

WE CALL ON THE AUTHORITIES TO:

WHAT WE ASK

01 Quash the conviction and drop any charges that remain on record against Ismail Lghazaoui in connection with peaceful human rights work.

02 Confirm publicly that Ismail Lghazaoui faces no residual travel, financial, or professional restriction arising from this case.

03 Guarantee that Ismail Lghazaoui can resume that work without surveillance, summons, or further reprisal.

04 Provide effective remedy for the period of deprivation of liberty already served.

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

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DOCUMENTED VIOLATIONS

	INTERNATIONAL STANDARD
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
Judicial harassment	UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Articles 9, 12
Unfair trial	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14

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HOW THE CASE UNFOLDED

25 October 2024

ARREST

Stopped by police en route to protest

Police stopped Lghazaoui in Casablanca while he was on his way to a demonstration outside the United States consulate. He was taken to the Casablanca security headquarters, where his identity was recorded, and was assaulted during the arrest.

25 October 2024

RELEASE

Released after identity check

Lghazaoui was released later the same day after his identity was recorded.

19 November 2024

ARREST

Summoned and detained by the judicial police

Lghazaoui was summoned to the National Judicial Police Brigade in Casablanca, held in police custody for 48 hours and questioned.

21 November 2024

CHARGE FILED

Charged and kept in detention by Ain Sebaa prosecutor

Lghazaoui appeared before the King's Prosecutor at the Ain Sebaa Court of First Instance in Casablanca, was charged with incitement to commit a felony or misdemeanour and kept in detention; his bail request was rejected.

10 December 2024

CONVICTION

Convicted by Casablanca court

The Ain Sebaa Court of First Instance in Casablanca sentenced Lghazaoui to one year in prison and a fine of 5,000 Moroccan dirhams for inciting offences by electronic means. No specific felony or misdemeanour was identified.

28 January 2025

HEARING

Appeals court schedules ruling

The Casablanca Court of Appeals set 5 February 2025 as the date for issuing its decision on Lghazaoui's appeal against his one-year prison sentence.

5 February 2025

APPEAL: SENTENCE REDUCED

Sentence reduced on appeal

The appeals court reduced Lghazaoui's sentence to four months: two months enforced and two months suspended. The conviction was upheld.

5 February 2025

RELEASE

Released after two months

Lghazaoui was released immediately after the appeals ruling, having already served nearly two months in detention.

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THE FULL STORY

Background and Work

Ismail Lghazaoui is an agricultural engineer based in Casablanca. Since 2023 he has been active in Morocco's pro-Palestine solidarity movement, organising boycott campaigns and street protests in response to the war in Gaza. His activism centres on two international campaigns: the boycott of Carrefour, launched by Palestinian civil-society groups and the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement as a form of non-violent pressure on multinational firms doing business with Israel, and the "Mask off Maersk" campaign, which targets the Danish shipping giant Maersk for its role in transporting weapons to Israel.

Lghazaoui uses social media to amplify calls for consumer boycotts and to mobilise participants for demonstrations. His posts denounce Morocco's 2020 normalisation agreement with Israel, brokered by the United States in exchange for American recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara. That agreement remains deeply controversial among Moroccans who support Palestinian self-determination.

The Arrest

On 25 October 2024, Moroccan police arrested Lghazaoui in Casablanca while he was en route to a demonstration planned outside the United States consulate. The protest was organised to condemn American support for Israeli military operations in Gaza. He was released the same day. On 19 November 2024 he was summoned by the National Judicial Police Brigade and detained, and on 21 November he was charged under Article 267-5 of Morocco's criminal code, which criminalises "inciting to commit felonies and misdemeanors by electronic means."

Neither the prosecutor nor the court identified which specific felony or misdemeanour Lghazaoui was accused of inciting. The charge appears to have been based on his social-media activity promoting the Carrefour and Maersk boycott campaigns.

Legal Proceedings

On 10 December 2024, the Ain Sebaa Court of First Instance in Casablanca convicted Lghazaoui and sentenced him to one year in prison and a fine of 5,000 Moroccan dirhams (approximately €478). The trial lasted less than two months from arrest to verdict. The proceedings offered no clarity on which posts or statements formed the basis of the prosecution.

Lghazaoui appealed the conviction. On 28 January 2025, the Casablanca Court of Appeals scheduled 5 February 2025 as the date for its ruling. On that date, the appeals court reduced the sentence to four months: two months enforced and two months suspended. Because Lghazaoui had already served nearly two months in detention, he was released immediately. The conviction, however, was upheld.

International Response

Lghazaoui's case is one of dozens of prosecutions brought by Moroccan authorities against pro-Palestine activists since 2023. The charge of "inciting" offences via electronic means has become a standard tool for silencing online advocacy. The lack of specificity in the charges against Lghazaoui, no identified felony, no named victim, no alleged harm, underscores the use of the criminal code to punish political speech rather than to prosecute genuine criminal conduct.

His release does not erase the two months he spent in detention, nor the chilling effect his prosecution has on others coordinating boycott campaigns and solidarity protests in Morocco.

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SAMPLE LETTER

Copy it, adapt it and send it from your own address.

Your Excellency,

I am writing about the case of Ismail Lghazaoui, agricultural engineer; pro-Palestine activist coordinating boycott campaigns against companies linked to Israel in Morocco, who has been released. I am writing to ask that the case be closed properly and that no further reprisal follows.

In brief: Agricultural engineer and pro-Palestine advocate imprisoned for two months for social-media posts supporting boycotts of companies linked to Israel. Released February 2025 after sentence reduction on appeal.

I respectfully urge your authorities to:
1. Quash the conviction and drop any charges that remain on record against Ismail Lghazaoui in connection with peaceful human rights work;
2. Confirm publicly that Ismail Lghazaoui faces no residual travel, financial, or professional restriction arising from this case;
3. Guarantee that Ismail Lghazaoui can resume that work without surveillance, summons, or further reprisal;
4. Provide effective remedy for the period of deprivation of liberty already served.

I will continue to follow this case until the record against Ismail Lghazaoui is cleared and no reprisal remains.

Respectfully,

[Your name]
[Your city, country]
8 November 2026