

Advocacy dossier

Jamila Loukil

جميلة لوكيل

At liberty **Algeria**

Journalist, retired since 2022, and member of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (LADDH), who covered Hirak demonstrations in Oran and was arrested several times between 2019 and 2021. Charged with terrorism-related offences in 2021 and acquitted after four years of judicial harassment.

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The case at a glance

Journalist, retired since 2022, and member of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (LADDH), who covered Hirak demonstrations in Oran and was arrested several times between 2019 and 2021. Charged with terrorism-related offences in 2021 and acquitted after four years of judicial harassment.

Status **At liberty**	Arrested **28 Apr 2021**	Country **Algeria**
Sentence Acquitted of all charges on 26 February 2025.		
Charges Enrolment in a terrorist or subversive organization active abroad or in Algeria Conspiracy against state security to incite citizens to take up arms against state authority or to undermine the integrity of the national territory Propaganda likely to harm the national interest, of foreign origin or inspiration		

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Drop any charges that remain on record against Jamila Loukil in connection with peaceful human rights work.

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

03 Guarantee that Jamila Loukil can resume that work without surveillance, summons, or further reprisal.

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

02

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

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

Press freedom violation International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 19

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

03

How the case unfolded

22 November 2019

Arrest

Arrested at a campaign rally in Oran

Jamila Loukil was arrested with her husband, Kaddour Chouicha, at a presidential campaign rally in Oran and prosecuted for unauthorised gathering.

8 October 2020

Arrest

Briefly arrested at a sit-in

She was briefly arrested at a sit-in denouncing the killing of a woman.

21 December 2020

Acquittal

Acquitted in the gathering case

She was acquitted at first instance in the unauthorised gathering case. The acquittal was confirmed on appeal on 2 June 2021.

4 April 2021

Arrest

Arrested at a solidarity sit-in

21 April 2021

Context

Complaint against Oran officials

She filed a complaint against the prefect of Oran, the provincial police chief and a police commissioner for violence and abuse of power.

28 April 2021

Arrest

Arrested leaving the Oran court

She was arrested without a warrant with her husband as they left the Oran Court of Appeal, and taken to a police station for questioning.

29 April 2021

Charge filed

Charged with terrorism offences

The Public Prosecutor of Oran charged Loukil alongside Said Boudour, Kaddour Chouicha, and twelve other Hirak activists with enrolment in a terrorist organization, conspiracy against state security, and propaganda likely to harm the national interest. The terrorism charge carried a maximum sentence of twenty years.

29 April 2021

Conditional release

Released on bail after being charged

After the charges were brought, she was released on bail the same day.

17 September 2021

Context

Case transferred to Algiers anti-terrorism court

The investigative judge in Oran transferred her case to the anti-terrorism and cross-border division of the Sidi Mohammed court in Algiers, moving proceedings from regional to national jurisdiction under specialized anti-terrorism chambers.

August 2022

Context

Trip to a UN-related meeting in Geneva blocked

At Oran airport, her husband was prevented from boarding his flight to Geneva for a UPR Info pre-session on Algeria on 31 August 2022, and she refused to travel without him.

7 September 2022

Hearing

Appeared before investigative judge

She appeared for investigation at the Sidi M'hamed Court in Algiers before the investigating judge of the anti-terrorism unit, with Kaddour Chouicha and Said Boudour. She was not detained.

8 November 2022

Context

Investigating judge asks to drop all charges

The investigating judge requested the dismissal of all charges. The prosecutor objected.

29 September 2023

Context

Named in UN report on reprisals

The UN Secretary-General's annual report on reprisals against people who cooperate with the UN named her. She was named again in the reports of 26 September 2024 and 24 September 2025.

3 December 2023

Acquittal

Acquitted at first instance by the Dar El Beida court

26 February 2025

Acquittal

Acquitted of all charges

The Criminal Court of Appeals of the Algiers Judicial Council acquitted Loukil, Boudour, and Chouicha of all terrorism-related charges. The verdict had been postponed four times.

September 2026

Other act

Named again in the UN report on reprisals

The UN Secretary-General's 2026 report on intimidation and reprisals against people who cooperate with the UN followed up on her case and that of her husband, Kaddour Chouicha, recalling the travel obstacles that prevented their participation in Algeria's 2022 Universal Periodic Review.

04

The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: this record was checked against current sources. Jamila Loukil is free: the Algiers appeal court acquitted her, her husband Kaddour Chouicha and Said Boudour of all terrorism-related charges on 26 February 2025, and no new proceedings against her have been reported. The UN Secretary-General's September 2026 report on reprisals again followed up her case.

Background and Work

Jamila Loukil is a journalist and a member of the Algerian League for Human Rights (Ligue Algérienne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme, LADDH), one of the country's oldest independent human rights organizations. Her reporting focused on the Hirak protest movement, which began in February 2019 as a sustained campaign of peaceful demonstrations calling for democratic change, an end to corruption, and the resignation of long-time president Abdelaziz Bouteflika. She worked in Oran, Algeria's second-largest city, documenting demonstrations and the experiences of activists. She retired from journalism in May 2022.

She was arrested several times during the Hirak: on 22 November 2019 at a presidential campaign rally in Oran, after which she was prosecuted for unauthorised gathering and later acquitted; on 8 October 2020 at a sit-in denouncing the killing of a woman; on 4 April 2021 at a solidarity sit-in; and on 28 April 2021, without a warrant, as she left the Oran Court of Appeal with her husband, Kaddour Chouicha.

The Hirak brought millions of Algerians into the streets each week. After Bouteflika stepped down in April 2019, demonstrations continued, demanding deeper structural reform. Authorities responded with waves of arrests, targeting activists, journalists, and defenders who documented state abuses or voiced dissent.

The Charges

On 29 April 2021, the Public Prosecutor of Oran charged Jamila Loukil, Said Boudour, Kaddour Chouicha, and twelve other Hirak activists with "enrolment in a terrorist or subversive organization active abroad or in Algeria," "conspiracy against state security to incite citizens to take up arms against state authority or to undermine the integrity of the national territory," and "propaganda likely to harm the national interest, of foreign origin or inspiration." She was released on bail the same day. The terrorism charge carried a maximum sentence of twenty years in prison.

The charges linked peaceful activism to terrorism, a tactic increasingly used against Hirak defenders. Algerian civil society documented a surge in arbitrary arrests and prosecutions following legislative elections in June 2021, as authorities sought to suppress opposition and consolidate control.

Transfer to National Jurisdiction

On 17 September 2021, the investigative judge in Oran transferred the cases of Loukil, Boudour, and Chouicha to the anti-terrorism and cross-border division of the Sidi Mohammed court in Algiers. The transfer moved the case from regional to national jurisdiction and placed it under a specialized anti-terrorism chamber. It remained unclear whether the

new investigative judge would restart proceedings or rely on earlier decisions.

The transfer heightened the risk of pretrial detention and prolonged judicial proceedings. Said Boudour was placed under judicial surveillance, while Kaddour Chouicha was subjected to a travel ban. Loukil faced the prospect of lengthy pretrial detention if the investigative judge ordered it.

Summons and Investigation

On 5 September 2022, Loukil was summoned to appear for investigation on 7 September 2022 at 9:30 am before the investigative judge of the Fifth Chamber of the Specialized Criminal Court. The summons placed her at renewed risk of detention. She appeared before the judge at the Sidi M'hamed Court in Algiers. The investigation proceeded under the anti-terrorism framework. On 8 November 2022 the investigating judge requested the dismissal of all charges, but the prosecutor objected.

In August 2022 her husband was stopped at Oran airport on his way to a UPR Info pre-session on Algeria in Geneva, and she refused to travel without him. The UN Secretary-General's reports on reprisals against people who cooperate with the UN named her in 2023, 2024 and 2025.

Acquittal

On 3 December 2023, the Dar El Beida court acquitted her at first instance. On 26 February 2025, the Criminal Court of Appeals of the Algiers Judicial Council acquitted Jamila Loukil, Said Boudour, and Kaddour Chouicha of all charges. The verdict had been postponed four times. The acquittal came nearly four years after the initial charges were filed, during which Loukil remained under the threat of a twenty-year prison sentence for her journalism and human rights work.

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

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