

ADVOCACY DOSSIER

JAMILA MOJAHID

جميلة مجاهد

At liberty **Western Sahara**

A Sahrawi human rights defender prosecuted for "insulting public officials" after security forces attacked her vehicle and arrested her in May 2022. Her trial was postponed eight times before a verdict hearing in January 2023. In November 2024 she was banned from entering Turkey for five years.

HuMENA.

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Case reference HM-EH-2026-027

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THE CASE AT A GLANCE

A Sahrawi human rights defender prosecuted for "insulting public officials" after security forces attacked her vehicle and arrested her in May 2022. Her trial was postponed eight times before a verdict hearing in January 2023. In November 2024 she was banned from entering Turkey for five years.

STATUS	**At liberty**
ARRESTED	**9 May 2022**
COUNTRY	**Western Sahara**
CHARGES	**Insulting public officials while performing their duties**

WE CALL ON THE AUTHORITIES TO:

WHAT WE ASK

01 Immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Jamila Mojahid and on any family members affected by the same order.

02 Restore valid travel documents and remove any border-watch flags placed in connection with peaceful human rights work.

03 Comply with the ICCPR Article 12 guarantee of freedom of movement.

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

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DOCUMENTED VIOLATIONS

	INTERNATIONAL STANDARD
Arbitrary detention	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9
Judicial harassment	UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Articles 9, 12
Physical assault	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 7, 9
Prolonged pretrial detention	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9(3)
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
Unlawful surveillance	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 17

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HOW THE CASE UNFOLDED

3 May 2022

ARREST

Arrested after vehicle attack

Security forces stopped the vehicle she was travelling in with another defender and a child, broke the windshields, and violently arrested her. Her father was arrested later the same day.

3 May 2022

RELEASE

Released same evening

Both Jamila and her father were released from the Laayoune Police Department on the evening of 3 May, after a police interrogation report was issued.

3 May 2022

CONTEXT

Father arrested in reprisal

Her father, Al-Hussein Mojahid, was arrested the same day, questioned with her at the Laayoune police headquarters and released that evening.

9 May 2022

ARREST

Detained after summons

Summoned to the police station, she learned that criminal proceedings had been opened against her. She was detained and brought before the Court of First Instance in Laayoune.

9 May 2022

CONDITIONAL RELEASE

Released on bail

Granted provisional release on payment of bail set at 3,000 Moroccan dirhams (approximately 270 euros).

16 May 2022	HEARING	**First hearing postponed** The court hearing scheduled for 16 May 2022 was postponed, the first in a series of eight delays.
5 December 2022	HEARING	**Sixth postponement** The court hearing was postponed for the sixth time and rescheduled to 26 December 2022, due to the non-attendance of a police witness.
26 December 2022	HEARING	**Seventh postponement** The hearing scheduled for 26 December 2022 was postponed again.
2 January 2023	HEARING	**Eighth postponement** The court postponed the trial for the eighth consecutive time to 9 January 2023, citing the absence of the police officer witness. Her lawyer raised the need to conclude the case after more than eight months.
16 January 2023	HEARING	**Verdict hearing** The verdict was due on 16 January 2023 at the Court of First Instance in Laayoune, after eight postponements. The outcome has not been confirmed by an independent source.
14 November 2024	CONTEXT	**Held at Istanbul airport and banned from entering Turkey** She and CODESA secretary general Baih Jamaa were held at Istanbul airport and banned from entering Turkey for five years, over their part in a training on international humanitarian law in Istanbul in August 2024.

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THE FULL STORY

Background and Work

Jamila Mojahid is a Sahrawi human rights defender based in Laayoune, the largest city in the territory of Western Sahara, which has been under Moroccan administration since 1975. Her advocacy centres on the right of self-determination for the Sahrawi people, a position that brings her into direct conflict with Moroccan authorities.

She serves as vice-president of the Laayoune section of the Moroccan Association for Human Rights (AMDH), one of the few organisations permitted to operate in the territory that openly criticises state practices. She is also a member of the administrative committee of the Collective of Sahrawi Human Rights Defenders in Western Sahara (CODESA), a network that monitors arrests, enforced disappearances, and restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly.

Her work has made her a recurrent target. She has been detained multiple times, subjected to interrogation, and placed under surveillance by Moroccan security services. The charges she faces are part of a broader pattern of judicial harassment against Sahrawi activists.

The Arrest

On 3 May 2022, Jamila Mojahid was travelling in a vehicle with another Sahrawi woman human rights defender, Alrokby Alkhalifa, and a child. Moroccan security forces pursued the vehicle, forced it to stop, and broke the windshields. Officers violently arrested Jamila and attempted to arrest the child.

Later that day, officers arrested Jamila's father, Al-Hussein Mojahid. Both were taken to the Laayoune Police Department and questioned. A police report was drawn up charging them with "insulting public officials while performing their duties." Both were released the same evening.

On 9 May 2022, Jamila was summoned back to the police station. She was informed that criminal proceedings had been opened against her on the same charge. She was detained and brought before the Court of First Instance in Laayoune, where she was granted provisional release on payment of bail set at 3,000 Moroccan dirhams (approximately 270 euros).

Legal Proceedings

Her trial was scheduled to begin on 16 May 2022. It did not. The first hearing was postponed, as was the second, the third, and the fourth. By December 2022, the court had rescheduled proceedings six times. The prosecution cited the absence of a police officer summoned as a witness. That officer never appeared.

On 2 January 2023, the court postponed the trial for the eighth time, moving it to 9 January 2023. Jamila appeared in court accompanied by her lawyer, who challenged the repeated delays and noted that the

prosecution had failed to fulfil its obligation to summon witnesses. The case had by then dragged on for more than eight months.

On 16 January 2023, a verdict was expected. The repeated postponements, the failure to produce witnesses, and the trivial nature of the charge all pointed to a process designed not to establish guilt but to exhaust and intimidate.

Surveillance and Intimidation

Each hearing was attended by Moroccan intelligence officers, who photographed Sahrawi human rights defenders who came to observe the trial in solidarity with Jamila. The surveillance was open and deliberate, intended to discourage public support and to document who associated with her.

The judicial proceedings against Jamila Mojahid are part of a wider campaign of harassment against Sahrawi activists. Charges of insulting officials, disturbing public order, or participating in unauthorised gatherings are routinely used to criminalise peaceful advocacy. Trials are prolonged, hearings are delayed, and defendants are kept under legal limbo for months or years.

International Response

Regional and international human rights organisations have documented the pattern of judicial harassment in Western Sahara. Defenders like Jamila Mojahid face not only arrest and prosecution but also travel bans, physical assault, and smear campaigns. The charges against her reflect the Moroccan state's broader strategy of using criminal law to silence dissent in the territory.

Her case remains emblematic of the risks faced by those who document human rights violations in Western Sahara, where the state tolerates no challenge to its narrative of sovereignty and where the cost of advocacy is measured in detentions, trials, and years spent waiting for a verdict that may never come.

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SAMPLE LETTER

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

Your Excellency,

I am writing to demand the immediate lifting of the arbitrary travel ban imposed on Jamila Mojahid, vice-president of the Laayoune section of the Moroccan Association for Human Rights (AMDH); member of the administrative committee of the Collective of Sahrawi Human Rights Defenders (CODESA); advocate for Sahrawi self-determination in Western Sahara.

In brief: A Sahrawi human rights defender prosecuted for "insulting public officials" after security forces attacked her vehicle and arrested her in May 2022. Her trial was postponed eight times before a verdict hearing in January 2023. In November 2024 she was banned from entering Turkey for five years.

I respectfully urge your authorities to:
1. Immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Jamila Mojahid and on any family members affected by the same order;
2. Restore valid travel documents and remove any border-watch flags placed in connection with peaceful human rights work;
3. Comply with the ICCPR Article 12 guarantee of freedom of movement.

I will continue to monitor this case until Jamila Mojahid's freedom of movement is restored.

Respectfully,

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