ADVOCACY DOSSIER

KADDOUR CHOUICHA

قدور شويشة

At liberty **Algeria**

University lecturer and vice-president of Algeria's League for the Defence of Human Rights, charged with terrorism offences for his work with the Hirak movement and acquitted after four years of judicial harassment. He was jailed in December 2019 and arrested several times between 2019 and 2021.

HuMENA.

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

Case reference HM-DZ-2026-001

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THE CASE AT A GLANCE

University lecturer and vice-president of Algeria's League for the Defence of Human Rights, charged with terrorism offences for his work with the Hirak movement and acquitted after four years of judicial harassment. He was jailed in December 2019 and arrested several times between 2019 and 2021.

STATUS	**At liberty**
ARRESTED	**28 Apr 2021**
COUNTRY	**Algeria**
SENTENCE	**Acquitted in the terrorism case on 26 February 2025. In a separate case, sentenced in absentia on 18 February 2024 to one year in prison; he filed an opposition, and its outcome is not known.**
CHARGES	**Enrolment in a terrorist or subversive organisation 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**

WE CALL ON THE AUTHORITIES TO:

WHAT WE ASK

01 Immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Kaddour Chouicha 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/kaddour-chouicha/

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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
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

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HOW THE CASE UNFOLDED

24 October 2019

ARREST

Briefly arrested at a sit-in in Oran

He was briefly arrested at a sit-in for prisoners of conscience in Oran, and his phone was confiscated.

22 November 2019

ARREST

Arrested with his wife Jamila Loukil

He was arrested with his wife Jamila Loukil and prosecuted for an unauthorised gathering and for disrupting a presidential candidate's meeting.

10 December 2019

CONVICTION

Sentenced to one year in prison and jailed

In an immediate trial, an Oran court sentenced him the same day to one year in prison, and he was jailed.

7 January 2020

CONDITIONAL RELEASE

Provisionally released

He was provisionally released for health reasons.

14 January 2020

ARREST

Arrested again in Oran

He was arrested again in Oran.

15 January 2020

RELEASE

Released without prosecution

The prosecutor decided not to prosecute him, and he was released.

3 March 2020

ACQUITTAL

Acquitted on appeal of the December 2019 charges

The Oran appeal court acquitted him of the charges for which he had been jailed in December 2019. The prosecution later took the case to the Supreme Court.

5 November 2020	ARREST	**Arrested near Oran prison** He was arrested near Oran prison while waiting for detainees to be released, and fined for breaching social distancing rules. The fine was later lifted.
18 January 2021	ACQUITTAL	**Acquitted in the gathering case** He and Jamila Loukil were 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** He was arrested with Jamila Loukil at a sit-in in solidarity with Said Chetouane.
28 April 2021	ARREST	**Arrested outside the Oran Court of Appeal** He and Jamila Loukil were arrested without a warrant as they left the Oran Court of Appeal and were questioned at a police station.
29 April 2021	CHARGE FILED	**Charged with terrorism offences** The Public Prosecutor of Oran charged Chouicha alongside Jamila Loukil, Said Boudour, and twelve other Hirak activists with enrolment in a terrorist organisation, conspiracy against state security, and propaganda harmful to the national interest.
29 April 2021	RELEASE	**Released after being charged** He was released the same day after being charged.
17 June 2021	CONTEXT	**UN experts write to Algeria about his case** UN special procedures sent a communication to Algeria about the judicial harassment of him, Jamila Loukil and Said Boudour.
September 2021	CONTEXT	**Case moved to the anti-terrorism court in Algiers** The case was transferred to the anti-terrorism unit of the Sidi M'hamed court in Algiers.
29 June 2022	CONTEXT	**Court orders the dissolution of LADDH** The Algiers Administrative Court ordered the dissolution of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights without notifying its members, who learned of it in December 2022.
24 August 2022	TRAVEL BAN IMPOSED	**Travel ban enforced at airport** Border police at Oran International Airport prevented Chouicha and his wife Jamila Loukil from boarding a flight to Paris. Loukil had been invited by the UN to attend a Universal Periodic Review pre-session on Algeria in Geneva.
7 September 2022	HEARING	**Appeared before an anti-terrorism investigating judge** Chouicha, Loukil, and Boudour appeared before the investigative judge of the Fifth Chamber of the Specialized Criminal Court, the Department of Combating Terrorism and Transnational Crime, at Sidi M'hamed Court in Algiers.
16 February 2023	CONTEXT	**Further UN communication to Algeria** UN special procedures sent a further communication to Algeria about his case.

11 May 2023

CONTEXT

Supreme Court orders a retrial in the 2019 case

The Supreme Court ordered a retrial in the case in which he had been acquitted on appeal on 3 March 2020.

29 September 2023

CONTEXT

Named in the UN report on reprisals

His case was cited in the UN Secretary-General's report on reprisals against people who cooperate with the UN, and again in the 2024 and 2025 reports.

3 December 2023

ACQUITTAL

Acquitted at first instance by the Dar El Beida court in the 2021 terrorism case

18 February 2024

RULING IN ABSENTIA

Sentenced in absentia to one year after a retrial in a separate older case

On retrial, the Oran court sentenced him in absentia to one year in prison for publishing information harmful to public order. He learned of the ruling in May 2024 and filed an opposition.

22 September 2024

HEARING

Opposition hearing postponed

The hearing on his opposition to the in absentia sentence was postponed to 20 October 2024. Its outcome is not known.

26 February 2025

ACQUITTAL

Acquitted of all charges

The Criminal Court of Appeals of the Algiers Judicial Council acquitted Chouicha, Loukil, and Boudour of all terrorism-related charges. The verdict followed four postponements and nearly four years of judicial proceedings.

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THE FULL STORY

Background and Work

Kaddour Chouicha is a university lecturer and long-standing human rights advocate based in Oran, Algeria's second-largest city. He serves as vice president of The Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (LADDH), one of the country's oldest and most prominent civil society organisations, and as president of its Oran chapter. His work has focused on the promotion of political and civil rights, often in contexts where such advocacy exposes defenders to state reprisal. He has also held the position of national coordinator for the Union of Teachers in Solidarity, bridging educational labour rights with broader civic activism.

LADDH has documented arbitrary detention, torture, and restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly across Algeria. Chouicha's leadership role placed him in direct contact with families of detained activists, journalists facing prosecution, and communities affected by police violence, particularly during the Hirak protest movement that began in 2019. His advocacy was institutional and methodical, grounded in legal documentation and public reporting.

Earlier Arrests

Before the terrorism case, Chouicha was arrested several times for his peaceful activism. On 22 November 2019 he was arrested with his wife Jamila Loukil, and on 10 December 2019 an Oran court sentenced him in an immediate trial to one year in prison. He was jailed, provisionally released on 7 January 2020, and acquitted on appeal on 3 March 2020. He was arrested again in January 2020, November 2020 and April 2021. In May 2023 the Supreme Court ordered a retrial in the 2019 case, and in February 2024 the Oran court sentenced him in absentia to one year in prison. He filed an opposition; its outcome is not known.

The Charges

On 29 April 2021, the Public Prosecutor of Oran charged Chouicha alongside fellow human rights defenders Jamila Loukil and Said Boudour, as well as twelve other activists associated with the Hirak movement. The charges included enrolment in a terrorist or subversive organisation 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.

The charges carried a potential sentence of twenty years' imprisonment. No evidence of violent activity was presented. The case appeared designed to criminalise civic organising and cross-border human rights engagement. Prosecutors invoked Algeria's anti-terrorism legal framework, a tool increasingly applied to silence dissent in the wake of Hirak.

Travel Ban and Judicial Harassment

Chouicha was placed under a travel ban that remained in force throughout the proceedings. On 24 August 2022, border police at Oran International Airport prevented him and his wife Jamila Loukil from boarding a scheduled flight to Paris. Loukil, a journalist and woman human rights defender, had been invited by the United Nations to attend a Universal Periodic Review pre-session on Algeria in Geneva. The travel ban blocked both their departure, effectively silencing Algeria-based voices from international human rights forums.

On 5 September 2022, Chouicha, Loukil, and Boudour were summoned to appear for investigation before the investigative judge of the Fifth Chamber of the Specialized Criminal Court, the Department of Combating Terrorism and Transnational Crime, at the Sidi M'hamed Court in Algiers. The summons, scheduled for 7 September 2022 at 9:30 am, carried the risk of pre-trial detention. The hearing took place, but detention was not ordered. The case continued to move slowly through the judicial system, with verdicts repeatedly postponed.

Acquittal

On 26 February 2025, the Criminal Court of Appeals of the Algiers Judicial Council acquitted Chouicha, Loukil, and Boudour of all charges. The verdict followed four postponements and nearly four years of judicial proceedings. The acquittal closed a case that had served as a sustained mechanism of control, restricting movement, imposing psychological pressure, and deterring international engagement.

The terrorism charges were dismissed in their entirety. No apology was issued. No compensation was offered. Chouicha's travel ban was lifted, and he resumed his teaching and advocacy work, though the years of legal limbo had interrupted professional projects, strained family life, and curtailed his ability to participate in regional and international human rights networks.

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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 Kaddour Chouicha, university lecturer; vice president of The Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (LADDH) and president of its Oran chapter, focusing on political and civil rights advocacy in Algeria.

In brief: University lecturer and vice-president of Algeria's League for the Defence of Human Rights, charged with terrorism offences for his work with the Hirak movement and acquitted after four years of judicial harassment. He was jailed in December 2019 and arrested several times between 2019 and 2021.

I respectfully urge your authorities to:
1. Immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Kaddour Chouicha 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 Kaddour Chouicha's freedom of movement is restored.

Respectfully,

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