

Advocacy dossier

Kamira Nait Sid

كاميرا نايت سيد

At liberty **Algeria**

Kamira Nait Sid co-leads an international NGO defending Amazigh rights. She was abducted from her home in August 2021, held incommunicado for days, then sentenced on terrorism charges she denies. Released September 2024 after three years in prison; her case is awaiting a new trial after the Supreme Court annulled her appeal conviction.

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The case at a glance

Kamira Nait Sid co-leads an international NGO defending Amazigh rights. She was abducted from her home in August 2021, held incommunicado for days, then sentenced on terrorism charges she denies. Released September 2024 after three years in prison; her case is awaiting a new trial after the Supreme Court annulled her appeal conviction.

Status	Arrested	Country
At liberty	**24 Aug 2021**	**Algeria**

Sentence Three years in prison and a fine of 100,000 Algerian dinars (approx. 660 euros) on appeal in July 2023; the Supreme Court annulled this judgment on 28 March 2024 and ordered a new trial.

Charges
Belonging to a terrorist organisation
Receiving funds from abroad for the purpose of political propaganda
Hate speech and discrimination
Use of technology to spread false information
Conspiracy
Undermining national unity and state security

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Drop any charges that remain on record against Kamira Nait Sid in connection with peaceful human rights work.

02 Confirm publicly that Kamira Nait Sid faces no residual travel, financial, or professional restriction arising from this case.

03 Guarantee that Kamira Nait Sid can resume that work without surveillance, summons, or further reprisal.

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

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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)

Enforced disappearance International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, Article 2
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 9, 16

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

Prolonged pretrial detention International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9(3)

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

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How the case unfolded

24 August 2021

Arrest

Abducted from her home

Kamira Nait Sid was abducted by security forces from her home in Tizi Ouzou province, northern Algeria, and held incommunicado at an unknown location.

1 September 2021

Reappearance in custody

First appearance before prosecutor

About a week after she was taken, Kamira Nait Sid was presented to the Public Prosecutor and then to an investigating judge at Sidi M'Hamed Court in Algiers, who placed her in detention. She was charged with undermining state security and belonging to a terrorist organisation.

1 April 2022

Context

UN Working Group finds her detention arbitrary (Opinion No. 15/2022)

The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention adopted Opinion No. 15/2022, finding the detention of Kamira Nait Sid arbitrary, considering that she had been subjected to enforced disappearance between 24 August and 1 September 2021, and calling for her release.

16 December 2022

Conviction

Court of first instance sentences her to five years

The criminal court of Dar El Beida convicted Kamira Nait Sid on terrorism and propaganda charges and sentenced her to five years in prison plus a fine of 100,000 Algerian dinars.

4 July 2023

Appeal: sentence reduced

Appeal court reduces sentence to three years

The Algiers Court of Appeal upheld the conviction but reduced her sentence to three years in prison and confirmed the fine.

30 November 2023

Context

UN Special Rapporteur visits her in prison

Mary Lawlor, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, visited Kamira Nait Sid in prison during her visit to Algeria and called for her release.

28 March 2024

Referral to trial

Supreme Court annuls appeal ruling and orders a new trial

The Supreme Court annulled the Algiers appeal judgment against Kamira Nait Sid and sent the case back to the Algiers appeal criminal court, sitting with new judges, for a new trial. It did not order her release.

1 September 2024

Release

Released after completing sentence

Kamira Nait Sid was released from Kolea Prison after serving three years. Her case was still awaiting a new trial after the Supreme Court annulled the appeal judgment in March 2024.

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The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: this record was checked again against current sources in English, Arabic and French. Kamira Nait Sid has been free since 1 September 2024, after serving the three-year sentence upheld on appeal on 4 July 2023. The new trial ordered by the Supreme Court on 28 March 2024 was reported by Algerian press to be listed in December 2025, but its outcome has not been confirmed by a source we could verify. She was tried in the same case as Slimane Bouhafs, who was released on the same day.

Background and Work

Kamira Nait Sid is co-president of the World Amazigh Congress, an international non-governmental organisation focused on the defence and promotion of the rights of Amazigh communities. The Amazigh people, also known as Berbers, are indigenous to North Africa, and their linguistic and cultural rights have long been contested in states where Arabic is the dominant language of government and public life.

The Congress operates as an advocacy platform at the international level. It submits alternative reports to United Nations treaty bodies and special procedures, addressing issues of racism, discrimination, political and linguistic rights, women's rights, and children's rights. Kamira Nait Sid's role involved coordinating that advocacy, representing the organisation in consultations, and working with other civil-society actors across the region and in diaspora.

The Arrest and Enforced Disappearance

On 24 August 2021, Algerian security forces arrived at Kamira Nait Sid's home in Tizi Ouzou province, northern Algeria. She was taken into custody without a warrant and without being informed of the legal basis for her detention. Her family was given no information about her whereabouts.

For about a week she was held at an unknown location, with no access to legal counsel and no contact with relatives. This period constituted an enforced disappearance under international law. On the morning of 1 September 2021, she was brought before the Public Prosecutor and later presented to an investigating judge at the Sidi M'Hamed Court in Algiers. She was accompanied by her lawyers at that hearing.

The charges filed against her included undermining national unity and state security and belonging to a terrorist organisation, under Article 87 bis of the Penal Code. These offences carry penalties ranging from ten years' imprisonment to life imprisonment, and in certain cases the death penalty. The prosecution alleged that she was affiliated with the Movement for the Autonomy of Kabylie, a political group that the Algerian government designated as a terrorist organisation in May 2021. Kamira Nait Sid denied the allegation.

Detention Conditions

Following her appearance before the judge, Kamira Nait Sid was remanded in custody at Kolea Prison in Tipaza province, west of Algiers. She remained in pretrial detention for more than a year while the investigation and prosecution proceeded. The conditions of her confinement and any restrictions on family or legal visits during this period have not

been publicly documented in detail.

Legal Proceedings

In December 2022, the court of first instance convicted Kamira Nait Sid and sentenced her to five years in prison. She was also fined 100,000 Algerian dinars, approximately 660 euros. The charges included belonging to a terrorist organisation, receiving funds from abroad for political propaganda, hate speech and discrimination, using technology to spread false information, and conspiracy. Her co-defendant, Slimane Bouhafs, a Christian minority-rights advocate and refugee who had been forcibly returned to Algeria from Tunisia, received a three-year sentence on similar charges.

Both defendants appealed. On 4 July 2023, the Algiers Court of Appeal upheld the convictions but reduced Kamira Nait Sid's sentence to three years, matching that of Bouhafs. The fine was confirmed. The defence argued throughout that the prosecution had failed to present evidence supporting the charges and that the proceedings violated guarantees of due process and fair trial. The court did not accept those arguments.

The two cases were linked by the prosecution's central claim: that both defendants were connected to the Movement for the Autonomy of Kabylie. Both denied any such connection. Their lawyers maintained that the charges were politically motivated and that the trial was used as a tool to silence advocacy on behalf of marginalised communities.

Release

Kamira Nait Sid completed her three-year sentence and was released from Kolea Prison on 1 September 2024. Slimane Bouhafs was released the same day. She had been detained continuously since her arrest in August 2021. On 28 March 2024 the Supreme Court had annulled the appeal judgment and sent the case back to the Algiers appeal court for a new trial. No outcome of that new trial has been published.

Latest updates on this case Scan the code or visit: https://humena.org/defenders/kamira-nait-sid/

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