

ADVOCACY DOSSIER

KHALED DRARENI

خالد درارني

At liberty **Algeria**

Algerian journalist arrested in 2020 while covering Hirak protests; released by pardon February 2021. On retrial in March 2022 his sentence was reduced to six months suspended.

HuMENA.

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

Case reference HM-DZ-2026-048

01

THE CASE AT A GLANCE

Algerian journalist arrested in 2020 while covering Hirak protests; released by pardon February 2021. On retrial in March 2022 his sentence was reduced to six months suspended.

STATUS	**At liberty**
ARRESTED	**29 Mar 2020**
COUNTRY	**Algeria**
SENTENCE	**Six months suspended and a fine of 50,000 Algerian dinars (retrial, Algiers appeal court, 3 March 2022); the earlier two-year term was quashed. Freed by presidential pardon on 19 February 2021.**
CHARGES	**Incitement of an unarmed gathering** **Harming national unity**

WE CALL ON THE AUTHORITIES TO:

WHAT WE ASK

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

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

03 Guarantee that Khaled Drareni 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/khaled-drareni/

02

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
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

14 May 2019

CONTEXT

Questioned by intelligence officers at a student march

Khaled Drareni was stopped and questioned by the intelligence services while covering a student demonstration in Algiers.

9 August 2019

CONTEXT

Held and questioned by police at a protest

Police stopped him during a demonstration, seized his phone, searched and questioned him, and told him to stop covering the Friday marches before letting him go.

30 December 2019

CONTEXT

Taken to Antar barracks for questioning

A domestic security officer took him to the Antar barracks, where senior officers questioned him.

9 January 2020

CONTEXT

Arrested at home and taken to an army barracks

Plain-clothes agents arrested him at home and took him to an army barracks in Algiers, where he was warned over his publications.

7 March 2020

ARREST

Arrested while covering a Hirak march

Khaled Drareni was arrested while covering a Hirak march in Algiers. He was held for three days and then placed under judicial control.

29 March 2020

ARREST

Arrested again and jailed in Koléa

Two days after a court revoked his judicial control, he was arrested again while covering a Hirak protest and jailed in Koléa prison.

10 August 2020

CONVICTION

Sentenced to 3 years in prison

Convicted by an Algiers court of incitement and harming national unity.

15 September 2020

APPEAL: SENTENCE REDUCED

Appeal reduces sentence to 2 years

Appellate court reduced the term to two years' imprisonment.

18 February 2021

PARDON

Presidential pardon announced

President Tebboune announced a pardon for Drareni among other political prisoners on the eve of the second Hirak anniversary.

19 February 2021

RELEASE

Released from Koléa prison

Drareni left prison after 11 months of detention.

25 March 2021

CONTEXT

Supreme Court orders a retrial

The Supreme Court accepted his cassation appeal and sent the case back to the Algiers appeal court for a new trial.

3 March 2022

APPEAL: SENTENCE REDUCED

Retrial reduces sentence to six months suspended

On retrial, the Algiers appeal court reduced his two-year prison term to a six-month suspended sentence with a 50,000 dinar fine.

28 April 2022

CONTEXT

Appointed RSF representative for North Africa

Reporters Without Borders appointed Khaled Drareni as its representative for North Africa.

04

THE FULL STORY

Background and work

Khaled Drareni is one of Algeria's most prominent independent journalists. He covers the Hirak movement, the post-Bouteflika political transition, and the consolidation of judicial restrictions on the press. He founded Casbah Tribune, was a correspondent for Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and the French-language broadcaster TV5 Monde, and in April 2022 became RSF's representative for North Africa.

Arrest and conviction

On 7 March 2020 Drareni was arrested while covering a Hirak march in Algiers, held for three days and placed under judicial control. On 29 March 2020, two days after the judicial control was revoked, he was arrested again while covering a protest and jailed in Koléa. He was charged with "incitement of an unarmed gathering" and "harming national unity". In August 2020 a court sentenced him to three years; an appeal reduced the sentence to two years. On 25 March 2021 the Supreme Court accepted his cassation appeal and ordered a retrial, and on 3 March 2022 the Algiers appeal court reduced the sentence to six months suspended with a fine of 50,000 dinars.

Release

Drareni was released from Koléa prison on 19 February 2021 under a pardon announced by President Abdelmadjid Tebboune. His release came three days before the second anniversary of the start of the Hirak protest wave and was seen as a partial concession to mounting international pressure from press-freedom groups, including a "We Are Khaled" campaign and a Paris ring-road billboard of his portrait.

After prison

Since his release Drareni has continued to work on press freedom in Algeria. In April 2022 Reporters Without Borders appointed him its representative for North Africa. His case remains the most internationally visible symbol of Algeria's post-Hirak media crackdown.

05

SAMPLE LETTER

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

Your Excellency,

I am writing about the case of Khaled Drareni, algerian independent journalist; founder of Casbah Tribune and, since April 2022, RSF representative for North Africa in Algeria, who has been released. I am writing to ask that the case be closed properly and that no further reprisal follows.

In brief: Algerian journalist arrested in 2020 while covering Hirak protests; released by pardon February 2021. On retrial in March 2022 his sentence was reduced to six months suspended.

I respectfully urge your authorities to:
1. Quash the conviction and drop any charges that remain on record against Khaled Drareni in connection with peaceful human rights work;
2. Confirm publicly that Khaled Drareni faces no residual travel, financial, or professional restriction arising from this case;
3. Guarantee that Khaled Drareni 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 Khaled Drareni is cleared and no reprisal remains.

Respectfully,

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