

ADVOCACY DOSSIER

MOHAMED TADJADIT

محمد تجاديت

Imprisoned (serving sentence) Algeria

Known as the "poet of the Hirak," Mohamed Tadjadit has been arrested at least eight times since 2019. In January 2025, aged 32, he was sentenced to five years in prison, cut to one year on appeal, for Facebook and TikTok posts, including poems critical of government policy. In a second case, an appeal court sentenced him in January 2026 to three years, one of them suspended.

HuMENA.

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Case reference HM-DZ-2025-002

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THE CASE AT A GLANCE

Known as the "poet of the Hirak," Mohamed Tadjadit has been arrested at least eight times since 2019. In January 2025, aged 32, he was sentenced to five years in prison, cut to one year on appeal, for Facebook and TikTok posts, including poems critical of government policy. In a second case, an appeal court sentenced him in January 2026 to three years, one of them suspended.

STATUS	**Imprisoned (serving sentence)**
ARRESTED	**16 Jan 2025**
COUNTRY	**Algeria**
SENTENCE	**Three years in prison (two years to serve, one year suspended) on appeal on 14 January 2026 in the second case. Faces a third case on charges that include one punishable by death.**
CHARGES	**Exposing publications likely to harm national interest** **Incitement to unarmed gatherings** **Apology for terrorism** **Use of information technologies to support terrorist entities** **Contempt of a public body** **Conspiracy aimed at inciting citizens against state authority and undermining national unity** **Receiving funds to undermine state security and national unity**

WE CALL ON THE AUTHORITIES TO:

WHAT WE ASK

01 Release Mohamed Tadjadit immediately and unconditionally.

02 Drop all charges related to the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights.

03 Ensure unrestricted access to legal counsel, family, and adequate medical care while in detention.

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

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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
Defamation and smear campaign	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 17 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Article 12
Denial of legal counsel	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14(3)
Judicial harassment	UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Articles 9, 12
Prolonged pretrial detention	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9(3)
Threats and intimidation	UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Article 12
Torture	Convention against Torture, Articles 1, 2 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 7
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

2019

ARREST

First arrest in connection with Hirak activism

Mohamed Tadjadit was arrested for the first time outside the Sidi M'hamed court in Algiers. Pretrial detention was ordered on 14 November 2019.

19 December 2019

CONVICTION

Sentenced to 18 months

The Sidi M'hamed court sentenced him to 18 months in prison.

2 January 2020

RELEASE

Released under a presidential pardon

He was released under a presidential pardon.

12 March 2020

APPEAL: SENTENCE REDUCED

Appeal court reduces sentence to one year suspended

The appeal court reduced his 2019 sentence to one year, suspended.

23 August 2020

ARREST

Second arrest at the family home

He was arrested at his family home in Harraoua and went on hunger strike until his trial.

21 January 2021	CONVICTION	**Sentenced to six months, two suspended** The court sentenced him to six months in prison, two of them suspended.
21 January 2021	RELEASE	**Released after the verdict** He was released on the day of the verdict.
4 April 2021	ARREST	**Third arrest over video of a minor's abuse claims** He was arrested after sharing a video in which a minor said he had been abused by police.
2022	CONVICTION	**Sentenced to two years over the video** Mohamed Tadjadit and four co-accused were sentenced to two years in prison for circulating a video in which a minor alleged abuse in police custody.
27 July 2022	APPEAL: SENTENCE REDUCED	**Appeal reduces sentence to 16 months** The appeal court reduced the two-year sentence to 16 months.
7 August 2022	RELEASE	**Released after serving the sentence** He was released after serving the reduced sentence.
24 October 2022	ARREST	**Fourth arrest** He was arrested again and placed in detention.
26 October 2022	UN OPINION OR DECISION	**UN Working Group finds his detention arbitrary** The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention found the detention of Mohamed Tadjadit and four co-defendants arbitrary (Opinion 45/2022).
6 November 2022	RELEASE	**Released after the indictment chamber quashes detention** He was released after the indictment chamber quashed the detention order.
2023	CONTEXT	**Arrested three times in 2023** He was arrested on 2 January, 4 April and 20 August 2023, and provisionally released each time.
2024	ARREST	**Arrested in second case** Mohamed Tadjadit was arrested, questioned without a lawyer on charges including apology for terrorism, and held at El Harrach prison for about nine months.
23 July 2024	CONVICTION	**Sentenced to six months in the April 2023 case** The Bab El Oued court sentenced him to six months in the case that followed his April 2023 arrest.
November 2024	RELEASE	**Released under a presidential pardon** Mohamed Tadjadit was released under a presidential pardon at the end of October or the start of November 2024.
16 January 2025	RE-ARREST	**Arrested at home in Algiers** Security forces arrested Mohamed Tadjadit at his home in Algiers after the #ManichRadi online campaign.

20 January 2025

CONVICTION

Sentenced to five years by Rouiba Court

The Rouiba Court of First Instance sentenced Mohamed Tadjadit to five years in prison and a fine of 200,000 dinars following expedited proceedings that did not allow adequate time to prepare his defense.

22 May 2025

APPEAL: SENTENCE REDUCED

Sentence reduced to one year on appeal

The Algiers Court of Appeal upheld the conviction but reduced the sentence from five years to one year in prison.

6 November 2025

CHARGE FILED

Third case reclassified with charges punishable by death

An Algiers court reclassified the case against him and 12 others, adding charges punishable by death. The trial was later set for 30 April 2026.

11 November 2025

CONVICTION

Sentenced to five years in second case

The Dar El Beïda Court of First Instance tried Mohamed Tadjadit alone on terrorism-related charges and sentenced him to five years in prison, a fine of 200,000 dinars, and 500,000 dinars in damages.

17 December 2025

HEARING

Appeal hearing postponed

His appeal in the second (terrorism) case before the Criminal Appeals Court of Algiers, first scheduled for 17 December 2025, was postponed to 14 January 2026.

14 January 2026

APPEAL: SENTENCE REDUCED

Sentence reduced to three years on appeal

The Criminal Appeals Court of Algiers reduced Mohamed Tadjadit's sentence in the second case from five years to three years in prison, including one year suspended.

28 April 2026

STATEMENT BY UN EXPERTS

UN experts call for his trial on capital charges to be quashed

UN experts said the trial set for 30 April 2026 on charges under Article 77 of the Penal Code, punishable by death, must be quashed.

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THE FULL STORY

Background and Work

Mohamed Tadjadit emerged as a public figure during the Hirak movement, the sustained popular mobilization that began in February 2019 demanding political accountability, the departure of long-standing elites, and democratic governance. He became known as the "poet of the Hirak" for his verses criticizing Algeria's political and socio-economic trajectory. He shared his work on Facebook and TikTok, platforms used widely by activists to circumvent state media control.

His online activity also included private conversations with other activists and sharing testimony from individuals alleging abuse by security forces. In one instance, he circulated a 2021 video in which a minor alleged torture in police custody. Authorities later prosecuted him and four co-accused in connection with that video, sentencing them in March 2022 to two years in prison, reduced on appeal to sixteen months.

Since 2019, Algerian authorities have prosecuted Mohamed Tadjadit in at least seven separate cases. Each has been linked to his peaceful activism, his social media posts, or his participation in the Hirak movement. For nearly six years, he and his family have been subjected to close surveillance, psychological pressure, and intimidation.

The January 2025 Arrest and First Conviction

On 16 January 2025, security forces arrested Mohamed Tadjadit at his home in Algiers. He had been arrested at least eight times since 2019. Four days later, on 20 January 2025, the Rouiba Court of First Instance sentenced him to five years in prison and a fine of 200,000 Algerian dinars (approximately €1,322). The proceedings were expedited; defense counsel had insufficient time to prepare.

The conviction was based on Facebook and TikTok posts, including poems criticizing government policies, and on private online conversations with other activists. The charges invoked provisions relating to "exposing publications likely to harm national interest" and "incitement to unarmed gatherings."

On 22 May 2025, the Algiers Court of Appeal upheld the conviction but reduced the sentence to one year in prison.

The Second Case: Terrorism-Related Charges

In a separate case, Mohamed Tadjadit spent nine months in pretrial detention between January and November 2024. On 11 November 2025, the Dar El Beïda Court of First Instance tried him alone, sentencing him to five years in prison, a fine of 200,000 dinars, and 500,000 dinars (approximately €3,305) in damages.

The charges included "apology for terrorism," "use of information technologies to support terrorist

entities," "incitement to an unarmed gathering," and "contempt of a public body," under Articles 87bis 4, 87bis 12, 100, and 146 of the Penal Code. All charges derived from social media content and peaceful political expression.

The terrorism provisions cited rely on a definition that includes "attempting to seize power or change the system of governance by unconstitutional means" and "undermining national unity." These formulations are vague, overly broad, and have been used systematically to prosecute dissent.

After a postponement from 17 December 2025, on 14 January 2026, the Criminal Appeals Court of Algiers reduced the sentence to three years in prison, including one year suspended. He remains detained in El Harrach prison.

The Third Case: Conspiracy and Capital Charges

Mohamed Tadjadit and twelve other activists face a third set of charges: conspiracy aimed at inciting citizens against state authority and undermining national unity, receiving funds to undermine state security, publishing content harmful to national interest, and incitement to an unarmed gathering. These charges fall under Articles 77, 78, 79, 95bis, 95bis 1, 96, and 100 of the Penal Code. The conspiracy offense is punishable by death.

Two of the co-defendants are in pretrial detention, four are already imprisoned in other cases, two are in exile, and the remainder are at liberty pending trial. The case was reclassified on 6 November 2025, and the trial was set for 30 April 2026. The case is ongoing.

One element cited by prosecutors is the 2021 video exposing testimony from a minor alleging torture in police custody. Mohamed Tadjadit and four co-accused had already been convicted in connection with that matter, with a sentence reduced on appeal to sixteen months.

Detention Conditions and Treatment

Mohamed Tadjadit is held in El Harrach prison in Algiers. Throughout his repeated arrests and detention periods, he has reportedly been subjected to psychological pressure, intimidation, and surveillance. His family has also been targeted with harassment. Such treatment may amount to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment under international human rights law.

Legal and Human Rights Concerns

Mohamed Tadjadit's cases raise serious concerns regarding arbitrary detention, the criminalization of peaceful expression and assembly, the use of vaguely worded terrorism and national-interest provisions to suppress dissent, and violations of fair trial rights, including expedited proceedings that limited adequate defense preparation. The multiplicity of overlapping prosecutions, some following prior pardons, amounts to sustained judicial harassment.

Algeria is a State Party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which protects the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and freedom of association under Articles 19,

21, and 22, and prohibits arbitrary detention under Article 9. The charges against Mohamed Tadjadit stem solely from the peaceful exercise of these rights.

Algeria has maintained a de facto moratorium on executions since 1993 but continues to impose death sentences following proceedings that raise fair trial concerns. The country has not ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

Broader Context

Since the outbreak of the Hirak protests in 2019, Algerian authorities have conducted sustained repression against peaceful dissent. Activists, journalists, whistleblowers, and ordinary citizens expressing criticism of the government have faced arrest, prosecution, and imprisonment. Vaguely worded terrorism-related provisions have increasingly been used to criminalize peaceful protest and expression, undermining fundamental freedoms guaranteed under international human rights law.

Mohamed Tadjadit's repeated arrests and prosecutions illustrate a sustained pattern of targeting peaceful Hirak activists through judicial harassment, intimidation, and the misuse of criminal law. His case is emblematic of the shrinking civic space in Algeria and underscores the urgent need to safeguard fundamental freedoms.

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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 release of Mohamed Tadjadit, poet and activist in the Hirak movement; shared critical poetry and political commentary on social media, currently detained in Algeria since 16 January 2025, and an end to all reprisals tied to this case.

In brief: Known as the "poet of the Hirak," Mohamed Tadjadit has been arrested at least eight times since 2019. In January 2025, aged 32, he was sentenced to five years in prison, cut to one year on appeal, for Facebook and TikTok posts, including poems critical of government policy. In a second case, an appeal court sentenced him in January 2026 to three years, one of them suspended.

I respectfully urge your authorities to:
1. Release Mohamed Tadjadit immediately and unconditionally;
2. Drop all charges related to the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights;
3. Ensure unrestricted access to legal counsel, family, and adequate medical care while in detention.

I will continue to monitor this case until Mohamed Tadjadit is free.

Respectfully,

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