

Human Rights Watch

Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2002/07/30/free-political-prisoners-tunisia>

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The United States should urge Tunisia to release Hamma Hammami and all others imprisoned for peaceful political expression and activity, Human Rights Watch said today.

Noting recent U.S. praise for Tunisia's commitment to battling terrorism, the organization urged Secretary of State Colin L. Powell to send a strong message that the battle against terrorism must not be used as a cover to suppress dissent.

Although Hammami is only one of several hundred political prisoners in Tunisia, his case is emblematic of the way the government persecutes all who criticize it, be they Islamists, leftists, liberals, human rights activists or disaffected public servants.

Hammami is serving a sentence of three years and two months for his activities on behalf of the Tunisian Communist Workers Party, which the authorities have declared illegal.

Hammami's wife, human rights lawyer Radhia Nasraoui, has been on a hunger strike since June 26 to demand his release.

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