

**DUBLIN**

Front Line Defenders – Head Office
First Floor, Avoca Court
Temple Road, Blackrock
Co. Dublin, A94 R7W3, Ireland

info@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +353 1 212 3750
fax +353 1 233 8695

BRUSSELS

Front Line Defenders – EU Office
Square Marie-Louise 72
1000 Brussels
Belgium

euoffice@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +32 2 230 9383
fax +32 2 230 0028

23 June 2025

**Western Sahara: Escalating violations against imprisoned Sahrawi human rights defender
El Hussein Amaadour and woman human rights defender Soukaina Amaadour**

On 19 June 2025, the family of human rights defender **El Hussein Amaadour** reported that his sister **Soukaina Amaadour** was subjected to a degrading physical search while visiting him in Bouizakarne prison. This incident happened while the family reported that El Hussein Amaadour has been suffering from severe abdominal pain and rising fever for several days. According to what the human rights defender told his family, these symptoms may be a result of food poisoning in the prison.

[El Hussein Amaadour](#) (El Hussein El Bachir Ibrahim) is a Sahrawi human rights defender, former student movement leader and member of the “Sahrawi Center for Culture and Thought”, based in Laayoune. The human rights defender led many students protests for the rights and freedoms of Sahrawi people, particularly students, denouncing the occupation of Western Sahara by the Moroccan authorities. In December 2015, he led historical protests organized by Sahrawi students, demanding the Moroccan Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Rabat to establish a university in Western Sahara.

[Soukaina Amaadour](#) is a Sahrawi woman human rights defender who advocates for the right to self-determination of the Sahrawi people. She is a member of the administrative committee of the Collective of Sahrawi Human Rights Defenders (CODESA) and of the Committee of Families of Sahrawi Political Prisoners. She is the sister of human rights defender El Hussein Amaadour. Soukaina Amaadour has faced various forms of harassment by Moroccan authorities, both due to her own human rights work and her brother’s involvement in defending the rights of the Sahrawi people.

On 11 June 2025, the prison administration referred El Hussein Amaadour to the prison clinic, yet only for a brief medical assessment. The doctor at the prison clinic recommended an immediate transfer to an external hospital. However, the prison administration demanded that the human rights defender wear a uniform designated for public law prisoners in order to receive treatment at a hospital. El Hussein Amaadour refused this condition as this uniform is typically assigned to common law prisoners, which would undermine his status as a prisoner of conscience. The human rights defender maintains that he does not want to suffer such humiliation. He also refuses to eat any prison food as he fears that his critical medical conditions stems from poisoned prison food.

In addition, on 19 June 2025, the family of El Hussein Amaadour reported that Soukaina Amaadour was subjected to a degrading physical search while visiting him in prison. The search was reportedly ordered by the prison director and included threats of visitation denial and verbal abuse of racist and defamatory nature. The treatment constitutes a clear violation of her physical and psychological dignity and their right to maintain family contact.

These incidents follow the issuance of [Opinion No. 63/2024](#) by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, which found El-Houssein Amoudour's detention to be arbitrary and in violation of international human rights law. The Working Group has called for his immediate release and compensation.

Front Line Defenders strongly condemns the recent violations committed against Sahrawi human rights defender and political prisoner El Hussein Amaadour, as well as his sister and woman human rights defender Soukaina Amaadour. Front Line Defenders stands in solidarity with Sahrawi defenders facing systematic reprisals for engaging with international human rights mechanisms and exercising their fundamental freedoms.

Front Line Defenders calls on the Moroccan authorities to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release El Hussein Amaadour and ensure he receives adequate and dignified medical treatment outside the prison;
2. Conduct an independent and transparent investigation into the abuse suffered by Soukaina Amaadour;
3. End the targeting and intimidation of Sahrawi human rights defenders and their families, and guarantee in all circumstances that Sahrawi human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and without any restrictions.

Front Line Defenders Board of Directors

Kieran Mulvey, Roja Fazaeli, Verónica Vidal (Uruguay), Jim Conway, Eamon Gilmore, Maria Mulcahy, Dermot Hayes, Nicolas Marcoux, Clément Nyaletsossi Voule

Front Line Defenders International Advisory Council

James L. Cavallaro, Maryam Elahi, Michel Forst, Hina Jilani, Mary Lawlor

Front Line, The International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders trading as Front Line Defenders, is registered in Ireland as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. Registered Office: First Floor Avoca Court, Temple Road, Blackrock, Co. Dublin , A94 R7W3, Ireland

Company No. 593190; Registered Charity No. 20204494; CHY 22404