



## Tunisia

### Chaima Issa

#### *Facing years in prison for speaking out*

Speaking out for what she believes is right runs in activist Chaima Issa's blood. The daughter of a former political prisoner, Chaima speaks truth to power. Even if the cost is her freedom.

When Tunisian president Kais Saied suspended parliament, dismissed the prime minister and took executive control of the country in July 2021 citing emergency powers, Chaima was one of the first to publicly oppose him. Since his power grab, human rights in Tunisia are more fragile than ever. Freedom of expression is under attack. Military courts target critics of the government, and the legal system lacks independence.

After meeting foreign diplomats along with other Tunisian opposition figures to discuss the political situation in Tunisia, Chaima was arrested on 22 February 2023 as part of an investigation for alleged "conspiracy". She was released on 13 July after more than four months of arbitrary detention, but the legal case is ongoing and the authorities have banned her from travelling abroad and "appearing in public spaces". A military court, which lacks independence, is also investigating Chaima for criticizing the authorities on a radio show. She faces decades in prison.

But Chaima will not give up. In the judge's office Chaima exclaimed: "Is this Tunisia? Is this the Tunisia where we studied, you and me? Is this the Tunisia we dreamed of?" As she was taken to prison, surrounded by police officers, Chaima smiled, raised her fist and sang the national anthem.

In the two years since President Kais Saied's power grab, human rights in Tunisia have crumbled, many courts lack independence, and freedom of expression is under assault. Anyone who criticizes the president risks arrest and detention. But Chaima Issa is a woman who will not be silenced. After publicly opposing Kais Saied's actions, Chaima was arbitrarily arrested and detained for over four months. She faces decades in prison for her peaceful political activism.

## Take Action: Demand Chaima Issa's full freedom

Call on the Tunisian authorities to immediately drop the baseless investigation and other restrictions against Chaima Issa as they are related solely to the exercise of her human rights.

### Write to:

President of Tunisia (email only)  
Email: [contact@carthage.tn](mailto:contact@carthage.tn)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Presidence.tn/](https://www.facebook.com/Presidence.tn/)

Twitter / X: [@TnPresidency](https://twitter.com/TnPresidency)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr. Maher TRIMECHE, Counsellor & Chargé d'affaires, a.i.  
Embassy of the Republic of Tunisia  
515 O'Connor Street  
Ottawa, ON K1S 3P8

Email: [at.ottawa@diplomatie.gov.tn](mailto:at.ottawa@diplomatie.gov.tn)

Hashtags: #W4R23 #W4RCanada

## Show Chaima that she is not alone

Send Chaima messages of hope and solidarity. Let her know you support her in her fight for human rights in Tunisia.

Chaima Issa  
c/o Amnesty International  
Tunis Regional Office  
24 Avenue de la livre  
Les Berges du Lac 2  
Tunis  
Tunisia

Twitter / X: [@IssaaChaima](https://twitter.com/IssaaChaima)

