

March 18, 2021

His Majesty King Mohamed VI
King of Morocco
The Royal Palace
Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco

His Excellency Saadeddine Othmani
Prime Minister
Government of Morocco

Your Majesty and Your Excellency:

The American Historical Association expresses grave concern for Dr. Maâti Monjib, historian at the University of Mohammed V, Rabat. He was imprisoned on 29 December 2020, and he is now approaching the end of a second week of a hunger strike. The AHA respectfully, but urgently, calls upon you to release Dr. Monjib and see to it that he receives proper medical care immediately.

Dr. Monjib is a historian, journalist, and veteran defender of human rights. He has earned an international reputation as a distinguished historian for his research on some of the most urgent questions in Morocco's political history since independence, work that has revealed facts unflattering to the Moroccan government. His distinguished career is marked by the intertwining of the work of a professional historian with the respect for democracy and human rights.

In February of this year, Dr. Monjib was sentenced to a year in prison for, among other things, endangering the security of the state, money laundering, and fraudulent use of donations. He denies these charges, which as far as we can discern are baseless, levied more in the interest of a political agenda than honest law enforcement. Moroccan judicial officials decided his case in private, not allowing him or his lawyers to attend the sentencing. Prior to this arrest, Dr. Monjib suffered some five years of threats on his person, his livelihood, menacing behavior toward his family, and the curtailment of his basic civil rights.

The American Historical Association considers the right of historians to conduct research and publish their findings to be one of the core principles of the profession, and of academic freedom generally. This right applies especially to research that reveals uncomfortable historical truths. Moreover, the nonviolent exercise of the rights to freedom of expression and conscience is expressly protected under many international human rights conventions, including those to which Morocco is a signatory nation. Indeed, the respect of human rights is embodied in the laws and constitution of Morocco itself, and these principles were clarified by Morocco's Equity and Reconciliation Commission in 2005.

The American Historical Association is the largest organization of professional historians in the world, with over 11,200 members spanning the globe. On behalf of this international network of scholars, we respectfully urge the release of Dr. Monjib and the respect of his civil and legal rights. We ask for immediate attention to this matter to ensure Dr. Monjib's health and well-being.

We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jacqueline Jones". The script is cursive and fluid.

Jacqueline Jones
President, 2021

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James Grossman". The script is cursive and somewhat stylized.

James Grossman
Executive Director