



## **Amnesty Cardiff Newsextra**

### **Algeria Update 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for Djameleddine Fahassi**

If you were in Penarth on the morning of Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May, you will have seen a number of suspicious looking individuals, shaking Amnesty collecting boxes and clutching life-size silhouettes of 'disappeared' people.



6<sup>th</sup> May 2005 was a very important day – it was the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the disappearance of Djameleddine Fahassi, the Algerian journalist we have been campaigning for as a focus for our work on disappearances in Algeria. He and thousands of other people 'disappeared' in Algeria in the mid 1990's and there has been no news since.

On Monday 9 May a special commemoration meeting was attended by more than 30 people (that's a *big* turnout for a Cardiff AI meeting !). Gualtiero Badin, the AI Algeria co-ordinator gave an excellent summary of the situation in Algeria both past and present. Adel Guemar, previously himself an investigative journalist in Algeria and now living as a refugee in Swansea, also joined us with his wife, Narriman. They said that it was an honour to mark such a sad and special occasion.

Regular e-mail correspondence with Djamel's wife, Safia, has continued. She even provided us with a recipe for Toumina ( a semolina and honey delicacy),

which was served at the end of the meeting together with other Algerian snacks and mint tea. She was glad to know that we were holding this occasion on honour of Djamel. Over the past two years she has sent us a number of very moving e-mails describing what it was like for her when she came home to find her husband 'disappeared' :  
*'the nightmare started and won't stop even today. It is as if it were yesterday ! I was torn between looking after my baby who was then only 4 months old, and looking for my husband, who had disappeared as ghosts do. I went to the nearest police station, the hospitals, cemeteries, but nothing ..... Then started my activism within movements and associations for disappeared persons.....'*

Her e-mails are an amazing mixture of the hardship of living with uncertainty and bringing up a child alone, and details of the demonstrations and campaigns that she is constantly involved with.

Safia has not given up hope, and sent a special message to us all for our meeting on 9 May:

*I'm writing to you today, of course, to thank you for the nice ceremony your group and you are organizing to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the disappearance of my husband. I'm very grateful to you and I wish you thank all the friends there in my name and the name of my daughter Myriam. Tell to our friends that it is thanks to their courage and assistance that I'm militating here in Algeria for the truth about my husband, and also thousands of others who disappeared many years ago in Algeria. I wish you can tell them that I'm still hoping to meet him again alive, and be able to gather once again him Myriam and myself very soon.*

*Tell them, also that I have wished to be among them sharing the agreeable time and also sharing the nice feeling that I'm not alone in my pain. On the contrary, I am highly supported by friends who do not know me personally but have accepted to be friends in deeds and pain. Thank you very*

*much for you all and I hope to meet you after my husband's release, in shallah.  
warm kisses and hugs,  
Safia*

### **So what more can we do to help?**

We sent Safia a card, signed by all at the meeting, and sent her some photographs so that she can see what her friends here look like! Since January we've been writing a concentrated series of letters to the Algerian authorities asking again for a thorough investigation to be carried out into the disappearance of Djamel – so many letters have been sent that some of us have actually received replies (almost unheard of!).



Do not give up now. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE post the enclosed letters. One is specifically about Djamel and the other is about a general amnesty proposed in Algeria, that will effectively stop any further investigation into such disappearances. We do not want this to happen. Think of the effect on Safia and Myriam and the many families like them ! They deserve nothing less than truth and justice.