

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

350 Fifth Avenue, 34th Floor
New York, NY 10118-3299
Tel: 212-290-4700
Fax: 212-736-1300

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA DIVISION

Sarah Leah Whitson, *Executive Director*
Lama Fakhri, *Deputy Director*
Eric Goldstein, *Deputy Director*
Joe Stork, *Deputy Director*
Ahmed Benchemsi, *Advocacy and Communications
Director*

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Kathleen Peratis, *Co-chair*
Asli Bali, *Co-chair*
Bruce Rabb, *Officer*
Gary G. Sick, *Officer*
Gamal M. Abouali
Fouad Abdelmoumni
Hala Aldosari
Salah Al Hejalani
Abdul-Ghani Al-Iryani
Ahmed Al-Mukhaini
Ghanim Al-Najjar
Lisa Anderson
Shaul Bakhash
David Bernstein
Robert L. Bernstein
Nathan Brown
Paul Chevigny
Hanaa Edwar
Bahey El Din Hassan
Hassan Elmasry
Mansour Farhang
Loubna Freih Georges
Aeyal Gross
Amr Hamzawy
Asos Hardi
Shawan Jabarin
Marina Pinto Kaufman
Youssef Khlaf
Ahmed Mansoor
Stephen P. Marks
Abdelaziz Nouaydi
Nabeel Rajab
Vicki Riskin
Charles Shamas
Sid Sheinberg
Sussan Tahmasebi
Mustapha Tlili

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Kenneth Roth, *Executive Director*
Michele Alexander, *Deputy Executive Director,
Development and Global Initiatives*
Nicholas Dawes, *Deputy Executive Director,
Communications*
Iain Levine, *Deputy Executive Director, Program*
Chuck Lustig, *Deputy Executive Director, Operations*
Walid Ayoub, *Information Technology Director*
Emma Daly, *Communications Director*
Barbara Guglielmo, *Finance and Administration
Director*
Babatunde Olujobi, *Deputy Program Director*
Dinah PoKempner, *General Counsel*
Tom Porteous, *Deputy Program Director*
James Ross, *Legal and Policy Director*
Joe Saunders, *Deputy Program Director*
Frances Sinha, *Human Resources Director*

HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

www.hrw.org

May 25, 2016

Abdelmalek Sellal
Prime Minister
Algiers, Algeria

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

Please accept my regards on behalf of Human Rights Watch.

I am writing to kindly request information from your government related to research we are conducting on domestic violence in Algeria. We will incorporate relevant information that you provide into any report that we publish on the subject, provided that it reaches us by 30 June. We would also be most pleased to accept an invitation to discuss this issue in person with relevant officials in Algiers, and incorporate information they provide into our report.

As you may know, Human Rights Watch is a nongovernmental organization that monitors human rights in more than 90 countries worldwide. Human Rights Watch has investigated domestic violence and the state response in all regions of the world for more than 20 years. We have collaborated with governments, international agencies, and civil society groups to promote strong domestic violence laws and programs.

Human Rights Watch commends the Algerian authorities for the adoption, on December 10, 2015, of law n.15-19 amending parts of the Penal Code, which criminalizes and provides penalties for some acts of violence against women including some forms of domestic violence.

Human Rights Watch is studying the issue of domestic violence in Algeria and assessing the effectiveness of Algeria's laws, policies, and practice, in combatting domestic violence and responding adequately to victims' needs, in conformity with international human rights standards.

We would be pleased to reflect in our report your timely answers to the following questions:

- 1) Are there any specialized domestic violence units or domestic violence personnel in the police force? If so, how are they positioned at the level of local police stations? If not, are there plans to put in place such units or personnel?
- 2) Could you kindly describe the training that members of the police are required to undergo with respect to recognizing domestic violence and responding to allegations of domestic violence? Is there a protocol that they are to follow when a person wishes to file a complaint?
- 3) Is the government planning to adopt additional legislation on domestic violence, such as a law providing for emergency and long-term protection orders in cases of domestic violence?
- 4) In cases where a survivor or a suspected survivor of domestic violence visits a hospital or other medical facility, what is the protocol for reporting domestic violence cases to the police by medical personnel? Please specify any directive, policy, or other official order that regulates the way medical personnel communicates with the police in such cases.
- 5) How many shelters has the government created in Algeria to host victims of domestic violence, and what is the location and capacity of each? Are they reserved for domestic violence victims or do they also take in other populations? How many domestic violence survivors have received assistance in such shelters in 2014-2015?
- 6) Could you kindly describe measures being taken by the Ministry of National Solidarity and Women's Conditions to ensure that survivors of domestic violence have access to adequate services and support, including shelter, health, psycho-social, and legal services?
- 7) Could you kindly describe what referral systems exist in Algeria to ensure that survivors of domestic violence are referred to shelter, health, psycho-social, and legal services, including in rural areas?
Please also describe any action being taken by the Ministry to put such referral systems in place and ensure their implementation and effectiveness.
- 8) Could you kindly disclose the level of state funding allocated to services and support for survivors of domestic violence, including shelters, crisis centers, medical care, and legal aid?
- 9) The *Law n.01-15* published in the Official Journal of the Algerian Republic on February 4, 2015 created a fund from which the State would pay financial support to women and children in cases where the husband fails to do so in whole or in part. Is this fund operational? If so, can you specify how much money it has paid out since its creation and in how many cases?

10) Could you provide statistics about complaints filed with Algerian prosecutors for domestic violence, including, if available, breakdowns by type of violence, age of victim, location, and the judicial follow-up given the cases. We would particularly appreciate any information about the number of complaints that resulted in criminal charges, the number dismissed due to lack of evidence; number of complaints that resulted in the arrest of the perpetrator, and number of complaints withdrawn by the victim, for the period from 2010 to the present.

We reiterate our preference and readiness to come to Algeria to discuss these issues with you in person prior to the publication of our report.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response.

Yours truly,

[signature]

Sarah Leah Whitson
Executive Director
Middle East and North Africa
Human Rights Watch

Cc: Minister of Interior, M. Nouredine BEDOUI
Minister of Justice, M. Tayeb LOUH
Minister of National Solidarity and Family Affairs, Mme. Mounia Meslem