**The prison for the artistic production in Tunisia**

In Tunisia the population is by now completely worn out, affected by an unprecedented economic recession with has worsened the conditions of life of the poorest classes.

To that, one must add the exhausting farce of the dialogue between government and opposition, which by now has paralyzed the advancing of the redaction of the new Constitution, as well as any perspective to draft in the short run a project of law concerning the revision of the juridical apparatuses.

To that on must add the focused killings of the representative of the Left wing, Chokri Belaid (February 6, 2013) and of Mohamed Brahmi (July 25, 2013) and the ongoing threats to other exponents of the opposition.

And if it that were not enough, the freedom of expression, already ratified into the constitutional draft, has been repeatedly called into question through the arrests, the denunciations and the persecutions of artists, journalist and activists –paradoxically just those who, during the revolution, were in the first line. Now we are again in a climate of witch-hunt, as at the time of Ben Ali, since not even the juridical and the police apparatus of the old regime has been undermined.

It must be also emphasized that if on the one hand the mobilization of the social network enables us to know about the arrests of the renowned personalities, on the other hand violence and abuses against citizens and less known activists often go unnoticed; and this kind of violence and abuses has been started again in style, mostly in the inner regions of Tunisia.

For this reason we subscribe the petition made by a group of friends and colleagues of Radio Chaabi, following the last arrests of young revolutionary people:

22nd September 2013, 22.16 pm

In the night between Friday and Saturday, on September 21, 2013, around 4 am, Nejib Abidi, Yahya Dridi, Abdallah Yahya, Slim Abida, Mahmoud Ayed, Skander Ben Abid, together with two artist and activist friends, were arrested at Nejib Abidi’s home, in the neighbourhood of Lafayette in Tunis.

We have not been able to get much information, yet: we know that first they were carried to the police station of Bab Bhar in Tunis, where they stayed for around twelve hours and were they were seen for the last time by some of their friends. At date, we totally ignore the place in which they were taken away as well as their health. No official reason has been given to justify their arrest and their detention.

NEJIB ABIDI, 29 years old, is the president of AssoChaabi and he was a union organizer in the UGET (general union of Tunisian students). He is known for his radical political positions against the government of Ben Ali and of those who came to power after January 14, 2011. The day before his arrest, he was stolen of one of his two hard disks with inside the rushes of the documentary he was preparing; and the data of the other were definitively been cancelled after a formatting. Nejib appeared the last time in public during the demonstrations in support of Jabuer Mejiri and Nassredine Shili. This latter is the filmmaker of Nejib’s film.

YAHYA DRIDI, 26 years old, is an acoustic engineer and he is the general secretary of AssoChaabi. He has been working with Nejib since long. They went to Italy together for making the video on the Tunisians who disappeared in 2011. Attentive to the issues concerning social justice, Yahya was engaged with political film. He lives between Tunisia and France, where he carries on his artistic activities.

ABDALLAH YAHYA, 34 years old, is a film director. His documentary “Nous sommes ici”, which came out the last year, highlights the daily life of the residents of Jebel Jloud, a neighbourhood situated some kilometres from the capital, where unemployment, economic poverty and social difficulties concentrate. His next film, “Le Retour”, at a stage of final production, has been produced by Nassredine Shili.

SLIM ABIDA, 33 years old, is a bass player, funder of the group Jazz Oil. He lives between Tunis and Paris. He has been on the alternative musical scene for more than 10 years. He works with Nejib, Yahia and Mahmoud on the tracks of their next film.

MAHMOUD AYAD, 29 years old, is a pianist. He worked with numerous personalities of the alternative and contesting scene in Tunisia.

SKANDER BEN ABID, 20 years old, plays the clarinet and he is a student at the ISEC, like the two artists and activists’ girls arrested.

The arrest took place while they were working together on the music of Nejib’s film. This arrest demonstrates once again that the securitarian and repressive system deployed by the government and by the police is still in force.

The current government, which owes to all these young and less young people who have overcome their fear and overthrown the dictator during the revolution, has no gratitude towards the Tunisian people and its active youth. This government strips our revolution and violates our rights.

Our friends fight every day for freedom and justice. Through a choice of life which aims at making our society advance, they show a real preoccupation and attention towards the others, and in particular towards their fellow citizens, disregarded by the system.

Their arrest is situated in the wake of those of Jabeur Mejri, Ghazi Beji, Weld El 15, Klay BBJ and Nessreddine Shili; arrests which aim at stabbing the freedom of expression and the freedom of opinion.

These fundamental freedoms seemed to be conquered after January 14. Some of the deputies also guaranteed their inscription in the Constitution, and the government boasted of having established a State of right.

 We are involved in seeing such injustice which strikes the young revolutionary Tunisians while members of RDC are released, criminals come out from tribunals with remission of penalty and suspended sentence; and most of all, we don’t know who killed Chokri Belaid e Mohamed Brahmi, yet.

Through this public statement we claim loudly:

* THE IMMEDIATE LIBERATION AND WITHOUT CONDITIONS OF - LA LIBERAZIONE IMMEDIATA E SENZA CONDIZIONI DI NEJIB, YAHYIA, ABDELLAH,SLIM, YAHYA, MAHMOUD, SKANDER, AYA, AMAL, NASSREDDINE, JABEUR, WELD EL 15, KLAYBBJ; AND OF ALL THOSE WHO ARE SUBJECT TO THE REPRESSION FOR THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND THE FREEDOM OF OPINION

- THE END OF THE PERSECUTIONS AGAINST YOUNG PEOPLE, AND IN PARTICULAR OF THOSE WHO STILL FIGHT FOR ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE REVOLUTION.

-THE DISMANTLING OF THE REPRESSIVE AND LIBERTICIDAL APPARATUS, WHICH IS A LEGACY OF THE REGIME OF NOVEMBER 7, RESTING UPON THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN POLICE AND JUSTICE.