

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2025

His Excellency Kais Saied
President of the Republic of Tunisia
Carthage Palace
Tunis, Tunisia

Dear President Saied,

We write regarding the troubling case of Sonia Dahmani, a Tunisian lawyer and political commentator currently serving nearly five years in prison for her peaceful expression of speech. Ms. Dahmani is scheduled for a hearing tomorrow, September 30, 2025, where she faces an additional 10-year sentence. We urge you to show compassion and leadership around this hearing to grant her humanitarian release on time served. Doing so would help remove a troubling area of disagreement between our nations.

Ms. Dahmani was arrested on May 14, 2024, when masked police raided the offices of the Tunis Bar Association. She subsequently faced several prosecutions for her public remarks on television and radio under cybercrime Decree-Law 54, a law overly relied upon to limit the freedom of expression of journalists, commentators, and political figures in Tunisia. Serious concerns have been raised about Ms. Dahmani's health and safety while in detention at Manouba prison. She reportedly has endured degrading treatment, harassment, denial of medical care for existing medical conditions, and severe restrictions on visits from both family and legal counsel. Additionally, there have been deeply concerning allegations of sexual misconduct by prison staff. Ms. Dahmani's sister, Ramla Dahmani, also was handed a two-year sentence in absentia for publicly advocating on her sister's behalf.

As the symbolic birthplace of the Arab Spring, Tunisia has long been regarded as a bright spot for democratic aspirations and progress in the region. Finding a timely resolution to Sonia Dahmani's case and overturning the convictions against Ramla Dahmani will help reaffirm those powerful aspirations.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "A.B. Schiff", written over a horizontal line.

Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James P. McGovern", written over a horizontal line.

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State