

MOHAMED ALHOUMEKANI IS IN DANGER, THE EUROPEAN UNION MUST DEMAND HIS RELEASE

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We were shocked to learn on Sunday, August 25 the arrest in Yemen on Saturday, August 24 of Mohammed Saleh Alhoumekani Belgian citizen of Djiboutian origin. A delegation from Djibouti arrived Sunday in Sana'a to bring Mr. Alhoumekani to Djibouti, where he has to serve a prison sentence.

The name of Mohamed Alhoumekani, friend and longtime collaborator of the ESISC, is unknown to the general public. He is a simple man who raises his children and working hard in Brussels in a job that is way below his qualifications. He is first and foremost a just and right man, and this is why he is today being persecuted by the authorities of Djibouti with the complicity of Yemen.

His righteousness led him to denounce a state crime. On October 19, 1995 the body of Bernard Borrel, a French judge seconded to Djibouti was found dead, down a cliff, his body burned. Local authorities immediately concluded suicide. By cowardice, France accepted this conclusion as the government of Mr. Chirac preferred to preserve the good relations it had with a small country housing the main French military base in the region. However at the time of his death, Mr. Borrel, 39, was on duty, sent by the Minister of Justice to investigate a bombing that killed French soldiers a few years ago. A state lie on one side, a rigged investigation and multiple pressures on the other: Djibouti and Paris rivaled in meanness in this sad affair.

The testimony of Mohamed Alhoumekani, the determination of a new judge and the personal commitment of the new president would change everything.

A few years ago we wrote¹: "In 2000, a key witness came out of the shadows: Mr Mohamed Saleh Aloumekani, a former officer of the Djibouti Presidential Guard who is living in exile –we are proud, at the ESISC, that he is today one of our colleagues. He confirms that on the day after the death of Mr Borrel, he overheard a damning conversation among several men in the gardens of the Presidential Palace. One of them was none other than Ismail Omar Guelleh, who was at the time the director of the office of the President and the official responsible for the security forces. Guelleh

¹ Bernard Borrel : the truth, twelve years later! (Esisc: June 20, 2007).

is today the President of the Republic. On that day, October 19, 1995, henchmen came to tell him that 'the prying judge' was dead and 'that there were no traces.' Though he was heard several times in the course of the years which followed, Mr. Aloumekani never altered a word in his depositions."

Once elected, Nicolas Sarkozy had made this case a priority and promised to Elisabeth Borrel that the whole truth would be made. The same evening, Paris prosecutor's office issued the following statement: "The public prosecutor of Paris, in agreement and following the request of Ms. Sophie Clement, vice president in charge of the investigation of the Borrel case, precise that if the suicide theory has been initially retained, new evidences collected since 2002 are in favor of a criminal act."

The investigation has since continued under the direction of Judge Clement. Mohamed Alhoumekani was and remains a key witness.

This is why today they want to make him pay. It is obvious for everyone that if Mr. Alhoumekani is transferred to Djibouti his physical integrity and probably his life would seriously be threatened. Neither France where he consistently helped Justice, nor Belgium his country must not allow another crime to be perpetrated.

The European Union must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Mohamed Alhoumekani and his return to Europe.

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