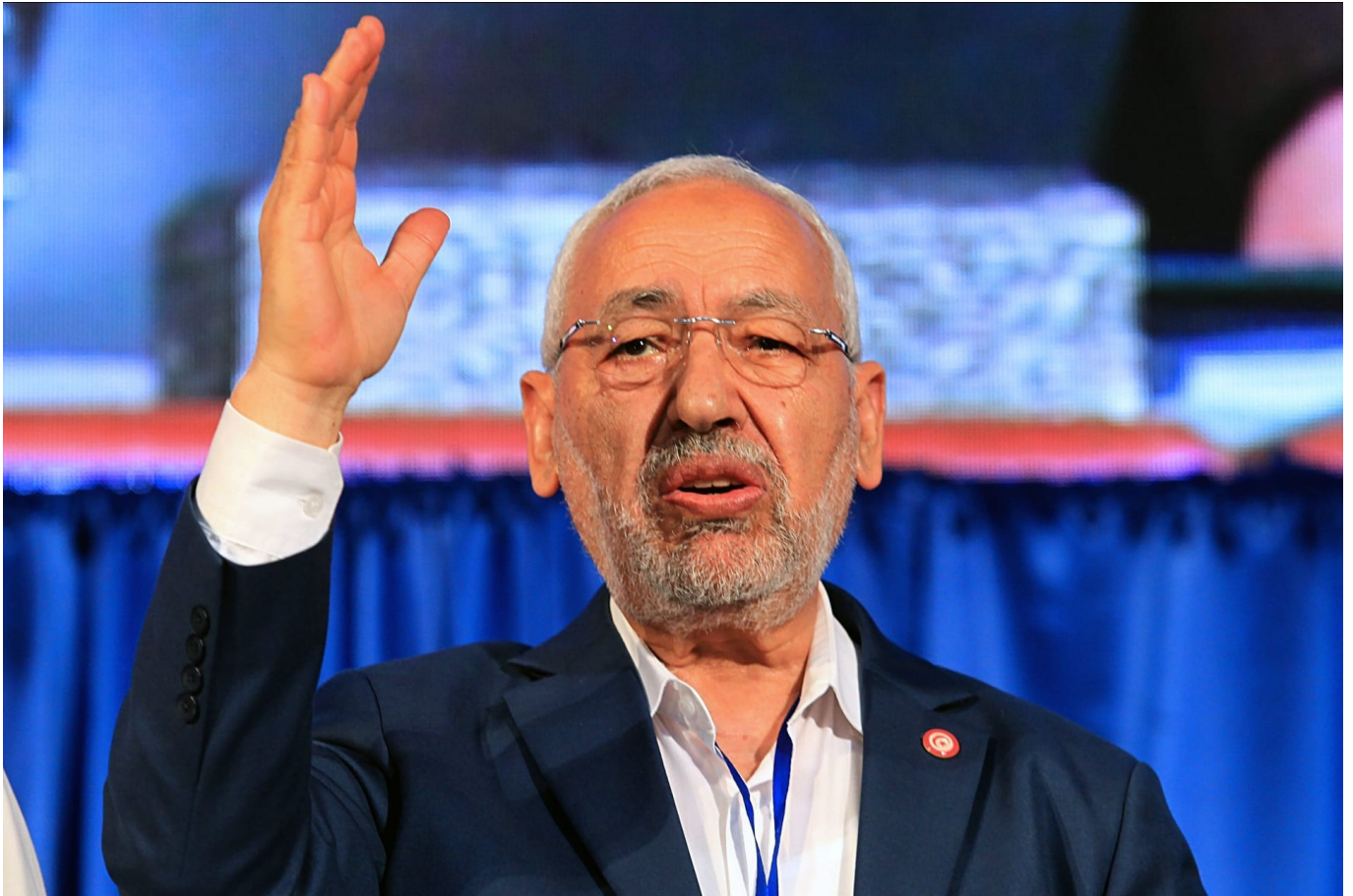


Prisons Are Dictators' Tool to Get Rid of Political Rivals



The Muslim Brotherhood (MB) strongly condemns the unfair court sentences issued yesterday, Wednesday, in Tunisia, where the Islamic thinker Sheikh Rashid Ghannouchi, head of the Ennahda Movement Party and former Speaker of the Tunisian Parliament, was sentenced to 22 years in prison, along with other tough sentences against members of his family and a host of politicians, journalists and bloggers.

These unfair sentences come in the context of an ongoing approach targeting political forces, where the sentences confirm that prisons have become a tool for authoritarian rulers to remove political rivals and exclude anyone who may oppose their oppressive policies, in attempt to terrorize peoples and silence any voice calling for freedom and democracy.

In fact, what is taking place today in Tunisia is no different from what happened in Egypt after the military coup, where leaders of the revolution's democratically elected government, headed by the late President Mohamed Morsi, were thrown into prison. Dr. Saad al-Katatni, the elected Speaker of Parliament, was also arrested, along with over a hundred members of parliament representing the Egyptian people. In addition, tens of thousands of politicians, activists and journalists who rejected the military rule have also been arrested.

These repressive policies only lead to more oppression and tyranny. However, they will not prevent people from continuing their struggle for change in the hope of the achievement of justice and freedom.

While we emphasize our stance of full solidarity with Sheikh Rashid Ghannouchi and all political detainees in Tunisia, we call on the Tunisian authorities to reverse these unfair sentences and immediately release all political detainees.

We also call on international and regional human rights organizations and the international community to take urgent action to pressure the Tunisian and Egyptian authorities to respect human rights principles, release all political detainees, and ensure the independence of the judiciary away from political exploitation.

May Allah Almighty protect Tunisia, Egypt and the peoples of the nation from all harm, and guide them for the achievement of justice, freedom and dignity.

MB Media Spokesperson

Sohaib Abdel Maqsoud

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