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Moroccan Refugee Ali Bourequat to Speak at IWU's Chapel Hour

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Ali Bourequat, a former military advisor and Moroccan secret service member, will speak about his 18 years spent in captivity, his work with Amnesty International, and the state of Moroccan human rights on Wednesday, Nov. 2 at 11 a.m. in Evelyn Chapel (1301 N. Park St., Bloomington). Although he will speak in French, translators will be present.

In addition to the chapel hour, Bourequat's visit will include a movie on Tuesday, Nov. 1st in Room 101 of The Center for Natural Science (201 Beecher St., Bloomington) from 4-6 p.m., titled *On the Dignity of the Human Soul: Ali Bourequat and his Imprisonment in Tazmamart Prison*. This event is sponsored by Amnesty International IWU Chapter, the African Studies Department and the African Students Association, and is free and open to the public.

In Bourequat's chapel hour presentation, sponsored by the Evelyn Chapel, he will speak about the importance faith had in keeping him alive in his small, underground cell with no light and little food. He was abducted in 1973, along with his two brothers and 55 other Moroccans, because of their political resistance to Moroccan King Hassan. Bourequat was the only surviving member of his family, and one of only 28 of the 58 to survive. Since Bourequat's release in 1991, he has been involved with Amnesty International, seeking asylum in the US and speaking out about human rights abuse in Morocco.

In an interview conducted with Bourequat in March of 2005 by Illinois Wesleyan Associate Professor of French Valerie Orlando, who is translating his book, *Dix-huit ans de solitude* to English, he revealed that one of the contributing factors to his survival was the mental exercise he was able to conduct alone in his cell. Bourequat, not particularly a devoted Muslim, said that, nevertheless, his continuous recitation of the Suras of the Qu'ran allowed him to keep his humanity.

For additional information, contact Orlando at (309)556- 3571 or the chapel office at (309)556-3005.