

Thursday, 30 May 2013

Anti-Femen protest outside Tunisia courthouse



Dozens of Tunisians demonstrated on Thursday against the topless protests of radical women's rights group Femen, outside a courthouse in the city of Kairouan where Tunisian activist Amina is due to go on trial. The small crowd shouted slogans, including "Get out" and "Dirty people," that were directed at the young woman who was arrested on May 19 after painting the word "Femen" on a wall near a cemetery. She is charged with illegal possession of pepper spray, which carries a possible prison sentence in Tunisia. A police cordon protected the court building, where lawyers, activists and journalists had come to attend the trial. Others said they were simply curious to see Amina, the day after three European members of the Femen group, two French and one German, were arrested for baring their breasts in the capital in support of the young Tunisian. "I have come to see this crazy woman who has aroused so much interest," Mohamed Slah told AFP. Mounir Sboui, the father of the woman known by her pseudonym Amina Tyler, said he was "proud" of his daughter for her ideological commitment while describing her acts as excessive. "I am proud of my daughter. This case is getting more and more politicized. Her actions were excessive but she defends her ideas," he said. Amina sparked both scandal and a wave of online support in socially conservative Tunisia after she was threatened by radical Islamists for posting topless pictures of herself on Facebook. According to her lawyer Souheib Bahri, the charges against her carry a prison sentence of up to five years, but he said he was confident that she only risked a maximum six month sentence for possessing the self-defense spray.