

**Catherine Ashton**

High Representative of the Union for  
Foreign Affairs & Security Policy  
Vice President of the European Commission

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



**European Institutions Office**

22 June 2012

Our Ref: B1224

Dear Baroness Ashton,

**REPORT: THE CIRCLE OF INJUSTICE: SECURITY OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS  
IN INGUSHETIA**

We should like to draw your attention to our latest report, which documents how human rights violations including torture, extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances, continue to go unchecked and unpunished in the North Caucasus. While the report focuses on the Republic of Ingushetia, its findings and recommendations refer to structural failings which occur across the region.

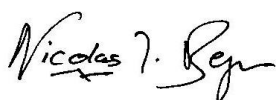
The situation in the North Caucasus remains extremely unstable. Law enforcement agencies responding to armed groups have shown scant regard for the rule of law and continue to engage in human rights abuses with total impunity. It is estimated that since 2002 more than 200 people have been abducted by law enforcement officials operating independently of central control. Despite this nobody has ever been prosecuted for an enforced disappearance in Ingushetia or, for that matter, in the overall region. The complex and opaque structure of the various law enforcement agencies operating in the North Caucasus allows officials to disclaim responsibility for human rights violations and complicates gathering the necessary evidence for prosecution. Besides this obstacle, however, there is also a fundamental lack of political will to investigate these violations. Until this changes, there can be no peace or lasting stability in the North Caucasus.

In the light of this we urge the EU to use all bilateral contacts to demand that the Russian Federation authorities:

- Acknowledge the human rights abuses committed by law enforcement officials in the course of security operations and commit themselves to strengthening the accountability of law enforcement agencies
- Review laws and policies on secrecy and protection of the identity of the units and officials involved in security operations
- Ensure adequate protection of complainants, witnesses and experts in all cases of alleged human rights violations by law enforcement agencies
- Cooperate fully with international and regional human rights mechanisms and ensure full implementation of the European Court of Human Rights' decisions on cases from the North Caucasus

We should naturally be happy to provide any further information you might require.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Nicolas J Beger  
Director