



Jerzy Miller
Minister of Interior and Administration
Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Brussels, 16 September 2011
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Dear Minister,

North Africa refugee crisis: Justice and Home Affairs Council, 22 September

The Council has repeatedly addressed migration issues arising from the crisis in the southern Mediterranean throughout this year, including the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of people in the wake of the conflict in Libya. The Conclusions adopted in April stressed the importance of offering durable solutions to those in need of international protection and took note of the willingness of certain Member States to consider offering resettlement to refugees in the region. According to UNHCR's update on emergency resettlement activity, there are now some 4,900 people stranded on the borders of Tunisia and Egypt, who need urgently to be resettled. They are predominantly Somali, Eritrean, Sudanese, Ethiopian and Iraqi refugees who cannot return to their home countries. Our new digest "*Europe, now it is your turn to act*", attached, details the conditions faced by these refugees forced out of Libya.

It is essential for EU countries to play a more active part in joining multinational efforts and sharing responsibility for refugees affected by the crisis in Libya. Amnesty International is particularly calling on EU member states to:

- Offer or increase resettlement places for refugees forced out of Libya
- Make resettlement more responsive to emergencies, which includes speeding up processing of resettlement referrals and departure arrangements, and taking a flexible approach to refugee profiles
- Ensure that any security assessments are based on thorough investigation of the circumstances of the people concerned, instead of applying blanket directives excluding particular categories of refugee
- Integrate support and services for refugees on arrival

We urge you to put this issue on the agenda of the forthcoming JHA Council meeting and ensure ministers respond positively to the UNHCR's appeal for an emergency resettlement initiative. We look forward to continuing our dialogue on these issues.

Yours sincerely,

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