

Brussels, 26 October 2006
Our ref : b594

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

Subject : AI Report on Ceuta and Melilla

One year after 13 migrants were killed and hundreds wounded while trying to enter the Spanish enclaves Ceuta and Melilla, Amnesty International presents its report on these tragic events and the wider migration implications. Based on testimonies of victims and contacts with Spanish and Moroccan authorities, the report '**Spain/Morocco : Rights of migrants and asylum-seekers still at risk one year after Ceuta and Melilla**' expresses concern that investigations into the actions of the Spanish and Moroccan security forces have not been concluded so far, and that no preventive measures have been adopted.

In a second part, the report investigates return policies of Spain and Morocco and documents unlawful collective expulsions, both from Spain to Morocco and from Morocco to Algeria and to Mauritania. Amnesty International was also able to speak to several persons who have been abandoned in the desert as a result of return operations. Finally, Amnesty noted increasing detention of asylum-seekers, migrants and refugees in Moroccan military camps, without access to legal representation and without information on their rights or on when they will be released.

While the report is critical of Spain's compliance with its international human rights obligations, it demonstrates once more the importance of human rights conditionality in EU relations with third countries in the field of migration. In Amnesty International's view, the EU and its Member States should ensure that agreements with third countries contain sufficient guarantees that the rights of asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants are fully respected and that adequate standards of protection are provided. This should not only be a guiding principle and precondition in the conclusion of readmission agreements with countries of origin or transit, but also in wider migration discussions with these countries, such as the forthcoming EU-African conference on migration and development in Tripoli.

A short summary of the report is attached to this letter. Please find the text of the full report on <http://www.amnesty-eu.be/>. For further details and related issues, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



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Director
Amnesty International EU Office