



Joint statement - Morocco-Spain border: The murderous dead-end

On 23 August 2018, 116 people were again deported from Ceuta to Morocco, with two people dying during the mass arrests in the region of Nador and Tanger right after this forced removal operations were conducted as a result. These events are yet another example of the consequences which flow from a violent, restrictive and security-oriented approach to migration policies.

Among the deportees, 17 were summoned to the first instance court of Tetouan (Morocco) on 10 September; they were sentenced to two months imprisonment for irregular entry and stay in the country, obstruction of officers during the performance of their duties, and weapon possession. The rest of the group were forcibly displaced by the Moroccan police back to other towns. On 31 August, peaceful demonstrations in front of the Spanish consulate in Tangier was violently dispersed.

Moroccan and Spanish authorities need to urgently put an end to the general context in which such tragic events have unfolded, especially: the unacceptable economic and social insecurity faced by migrants in Morocco including when in a regular situation; the impossibility to reach Spain even to seek asylum in the dedicated offices in Ceuta and Melilla; the violence and harassment exerted in full impunity against migrants and their supporters among the NGO sector.

In this context, EuroMed Rights, the FIDH & the OMCT:

- Urge the Moroccan authorities not to criminalise unlawful entry and stay, in accordance with the 2018 [OHCHR Principles and Guidelines on the human rights of migrants in a vulnerable situation](#), and thus express their concern at the criminal charges brought against 17 migrants;
- Stress that it is essential for perpetrators of violent acts are sanctioned, whoever they are, and thereby express their concern at the absence of proceedings against the official authorities who have acted violently on both sides of the border;
- Consider that Morocco should, as a matter of urgency, adopt without further delay a law on asylum and migration, alongside a genuine integration policy, in conformity with international law enabling the full and effective respect of the rights of migrants and refugees.

Finally, it is shocking to see Spain, in plain contradiction with earlier commitments by the new government, resorting to such violence and collective deportation of migrants – allegedly with the complicity of the Moroccan authorities. Such practices, which have been unanimously condemned by the United Nations, the Council of Europe and civil society organisations. Spain must immediately stop such practices and abolish the provisions of the “Citizens Security” Law which covers these practices.

In this respect, our organisations welcome the reopening of the inquiry into the Tarajal Massacre in February 2014 where 15 people were killed as a result of the use of [anti-riot material](#) by the Guardia Civil. We also welcome the opening of an inquiry by the judicial police in Morocco to investigate the causes of the deaths of the two Malian nationals who died during the mass arrests last August.



OMCT
SOS-Torture Network

fidh
Fédération internationale
des ligues des droits de l'Homme

EuroMed Rights, the FIDH and the OMCT hereby express their solidarity with the victims of these events. We express our support to Moroccan and Spanish civil society organisations as well as with migrant community organisations in Morocco which have immediately mobilised to ensure a close follow-up of events, as well as to provide support to victims.