

Media Advisory
Embargoed for 10 December 2001

7 December 2001

AI Index ASA 11/044/2001 - News Service Nr. 217

Afghanistan: Refugees fleeing the war are an international responsibility

Peshawar: Amnesty International has been interviewing Afghan refugees on the border with Pakistan and is reiterating its call on the international community, and in particular the US and the UK governments, to take urgent action to assist the refugees who have fled the war in Afghanistan, and to make a long term commitment to ensure their protection.

The international community must take responsibility for the refugees who have fled the bombing campaign. Pledges of international assistance at the start of the war have not materialised to the extent needed and thousands of people are living in desperate conditions. The UN refugee agency has only enough money to provide assistance to the end of the year. Refugees stranded in "no-man's-land" who talked to Amnesty International do not even have shelter or enough to eat.

Amnesty International's Secretary General, Irene Khan, will be lobbying for international refugee assistance during her visit to Pakistan around Human Rights Day (December 10).

For an interview, please contact Kamal Samari in Peshawar, Pakistan, on +92 (0) 300 954 4320 or +44 (0) 7778 472 126.

\ENDS

public document

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566
Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW web : <http://www.amnesty.org>
Last updated : December 7