

URGENT ACTION

EGYPT DEPORTS SYRIA REFUGEES

The Egyptian authorities deported 41 Syrians and Palestinians from Syria to Turkey and Lebanon. The group, which included at least 13 children and 10 women, had sought refuge in Egypt after fleeing the armed conflict in Syria.

The Egyptian Navy arrested 13 Syrians and 28 Palestinians who had fled the conflict in Syria near Dekhela port, Alexandria on 9 August 2013 and charged them with attempting to exit the country irregularly. The prosecutor had ordered their release but the Ministry of Interior did not release them for “national security reasons”. According to information available to Amnesty International, 28 Palestinians were deported on 21 August 2013 to Beirut, Lebanon. The other eight Syrians were deported to Istanbul, Turkey on 15 August 2013. The group had been held in Dekhela police station in Alexandria. The regional office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Cairo had confirmed that at least eight of the Syrians were registered with their office.

Anyone fleeing the conflict in Syria should be considered to be in need of international protection, including Syrian nationals and Palestinians who live in Syria. In addition to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Egypt is a state party to the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugees Problems in Africa which specifically prohibit State parties to deport people who fled their country of origin or country of habitual residence for internal armed conflict.

This action is now closed. Many thanks to all those who sent appeals



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to UNHCR, there are 107,112 refugees from Syria registered or awaiting registration in Egypt. After President Mohamed Morsi was deposed from power on 3 July 2013, much stricter entry requirements were suddenly imposed on Syrians entering Egypt on 8 July 2013, including the obligation to obtain visas before travel. Since 1 July the authorities have arrested at least 160 Syrians, and deported at least 61. According to information available to Amnesty International at least 70 Syrians are detained in Cairo, Alexandria and Marsa Matrouh. On 26 July UNHCR expressed concern about the situation faced by Syrians seeking refuge in Egypt, including the risk of arbitrary arrests amid a "growing anti-Syrian sentiment".

Around half of the some 500,000 Palestinian refugees living in Syria have become displaced by the conflict and related human rights abuses. More than 1,400 have been killed, the vast majority of them civilians, according to local activists. In the light of the difficult humanitarian situation caused by the continuing blockade on Gaza and the lack of any system for receiving refugees, Palestinians from Syria should under no circumstances be forced to go to Gaza.

Name: 28 Palestinians, 13 Syrians

Gender m/f: Both

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<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE12/044/2013/en>