

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

PUBLIC STATEMENT

20 January 2014

AI Index: EUR 30/001/2014

On the eve of Parliamentary debate, Amnesty International urges Italy to abrogate the crime of irregular migration

As the Italian Senate resumes debates on penal law reforms on Tuesday, Amnesty International urges Italy to abrogate the crime of irregular migration.

Since its adoption in 2009, Amnesty International has continuously reminded the Italian authorities that the crime of “illegal entry and stay” is not compatible with Italy’s international human rights obligations.

Research conducted by Amnesty International, published in December 2012, shows that the criminalisation of irregular migration creates obstacles to irregular migrants’ access to justice and increases their vulnerability to labour exploitation.

Amnesty International included the abolition of the crime of irregular migration among its recommendations to all political parties before the latest Parliamentary elections. Among current Parliamentarians, a hundred agreed with this specific recommendation, committing to act upon it if elected.

The debate regarding a Bill instructing the government to legislate on alternatives to the punishment of imprisonment, with the aim of reducing prison overcrowding, started on Wednesday 15 January at the Italian Senate and will resume on Tuesday 21 January. An amendment to the bill, also to be voted upon by the Senate after the end of the debate, foresees the abrogation of the crime of “illegal entry and stay”, which would become an administrative offense.

End/