

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

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Egypt: Amnesty International condemns attacks against civilians in Taba

Amnesty International condemns in the strongest terms the bomb attacks which claimed the lives of more than 30 civilians and injured more than 100 others in the Sinai region of Egypt on 7 October 2004. The car bomb attacks on three hotels in and around the tourist resort of Taba targeted civilians, Egyptians and foreigners alike. According to the Egyptian Public Prosecutor those killed included 14 Israelis and nine Egyptians.

Such deliberate attacks against civilians constitute crimes against humanity and can never be justified under any circumstance. Amnesty International has repeatedly condemned suicide bombings and other attacks against civilians carried out by armed groups in the region and elsewhere.

The bomb attacks are believed to have been timed to coincide with the large presence of Israeli tourists in the area due to the Jewish holidays. While an unknown Islamist group has reportedly claimed responsibility for the attacks, no further details are yet known about the perpetrators.

Hundreds of people have reportedly been rounded up by the Egyptian authorities in connection with the bomb attacks. States have a duty to take measures to protect persons within their jurisdiction and to bring to justice those responsible for such attacks. However, any such measures must comply fully with international human rights law. Notably, concrete steps must be taken by the concerned authorities to ensure that suspects are not subject to torture or ill-treatment and are given the right to a fair trial. Amnesty International is also concerned that anyone convicted for these or other such attacks should not be sentenced to death.