

# URGENT ACTION

## ERITREAN NATIONALS RELEASED IN LIBYA

**Some 200 Eritrean nationals previously held in Libya are no longer at imminent risk of forcible return to Eritrea, where they would have been at risk of torture or other ill-treatment. On 7 July, the Libyan authorities announced the release of 400 Eritrean nationals from detention centres where they had been held, and the decision to grant them three-month residency permits. The authorities' announcement appears to have been the result of international pressure, including campaigning from Amnesty International.**

According to information received by Amnesty International, on the night of 29 June, about 100 soldiers and police officers surrounded the Misratah detention centre where some 230 Eritrean nationals were held. They were reportedly armed with tear-gas guns and other weapons. On 30 June, at around 5 am, the military and police forces are said to have entered the cells and are then said to have started beating the detainees with sticks and whips. At least 14 people were reportedly seriously injured and were taken to hospital the next day. That same day, more than 200 Eritrean detainees were forcibly transferred in two truck-containers Misratah to al-Birak detention centre in Sabha. They had been held in poor conditions in al-Birak, and feared being forcibly returned to Eritrea. Once in Eritrea, they would have been at risk of torture and other ill-treatment as punishment for "betraying" the country or fleeing military service. Their fears were compounded by threats by Libyan security forces while beating them that they would either be killed or deported.

It is not clear what will happen to the Eritrean nationals in Libya on the expiry of their three-month residency permits in early October. Amnesty International will continue to monitor their situation, and will take further action as necessary.

**No further action is requested from the UA network at present. Thanks to all who sent appeals.**

This is the first update of UA 150/10 (MDE 19/015/2010). Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE19/015/2010/en>

Further information on UA: 150/10 Index: MDE 19/018/2010 Issue Date: 07 September 2010

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**

