

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

28 November 2024 EUR 30/8713/2024

STATEMENT EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS VIOLATING HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHTS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND TO PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY, ON 5 OCTOBER IN ROME PRECEDING AND DURING THE “NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION FOR PALESTINE”

Amnesty International is concerned that the Italian authorities’ actions regarding the “National Demonstration for Palestine” that took place in Rome on 5 October 2024 violated human rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and to peaceful assembly. We are calling on the authorities to carry out an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into all allegations of human rights violations during the 5 October demonstration and to take all steps to facilitate the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.

Amnesty International believes that the pre-emptive ban imposed by the authorities ahead of the Palestinian solidarity protest was discriminatory and breached the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, and calls on the authorities to refrain from such measures, and instead to take action to uphold and facilitate the right to peaceful protest.¹ The organization also expresses concerns about other preventive administrative measures taken against protesters ahead of the 5th October demonstration, the unwarranted dispersal of the demonstration and the unlawful use of force by police against peaceful protesters.

On the day of the demonstration, the authorities communicated verbally to the organizers that the ban was partially lifted. However, this retraction of the ban was not communicated in writing and, according to reports, the lack of clarity about the ban may have caused confusion among officers policing the protest. On 5 October, thousands of people from all over Italy, profoundly concerned about the rights of Palestinian people, turned out to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Amnesty International sent a team of trained observers to the demonstration on 5 October, as it has done in relation to other demonstrations in the country. This statement serves as a summary of the key human rights concerns regarding the conduct of the law enforcement officials at the protest. The information contained in this statement is drawn from an analysis of information collected by Amnesty International before, during and after the protest, including the testimonies of two members of the organizing groups, seven protesters (four female and three male), four lawyers representing people affected by the administrative charges and one human rights organization, and analysis of reports and video footage collected by its team of observers² that was monitoring the event. All the information collected was

¹See also: Amnesty International, Italia, Dichiarazione sul divieto di manifestare il 5 ottobre a Roma per la Palestina, 2 October 2024, <https://www.amnesty.it/dichiarazione-sul-divieto-di-manifestare-il-5-ottobre-a-roma-per-la-palestina/>

² Task Force: scopri i gruppi di lavoro di attivismo specializzato di Amnesty

assessed against international standards and pertinent legal obligations the Italian state has under treaties to which it is party.

Prior to its release, Amnesty International shared the key findings and human rights concerns included in this statement with the Italian Minister of Interior and the Head of the Police of the city of Rome with a view to offering them the possibility to respond and comment on the same in advance.³ At the time of the statement's publication, the authorities had not replied.

PRE-EMPTIVE AND DISCRIMINATORY BAN ON 5TH OCTOBER DEMONSTRATION CONSTITUTES AN UNJUSTIFIED INTERFERENCE WITH THE RIGHTS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

In September, the Italian Minister of Interior stated publicly his intention to block demonstrations expressing concern about Palestinian human rights to avoid what he called a “massacre celebration”, referencing the attacks by Hamas and other armed groups on 7 October 2023 in Israel.⁴ Subsequently, on 24th September 2024, the Head of the Police of the City of Rome issued a pre-emptive ban on a national Palestinian solidarity demonstration scheduled to take place at 2 pm on 5 October in Rome, as a march between Republic square and S. Giovanni square and aimed at “reaffirming the recognition of the state of Palestine, the freedom of its people, and demanding an end to the war”.

According to the official decision to impose a pre-emptive ban, the police asserted that in their view “the demonstration could push an ideological celebration of the massacre conducted against the State of Israel”.⁵ The decision also appears to take the view that it could somehow have connotations detrimental to “the commemorative spirit of the victims of the racial laws and the condemnation of the extermination of the Jewish people” and expressed vaguely worded fears that the organizers demonstrated an “unlawful attitude” because they reiterated their will to hold the demonstration despite the Minister’s statement that all such demonstrations would be banned. The public meeting would therefore “not be compliant” with the right to demonstrate peacefully as it could represent a “serious disturbance to public order and safety”.⁶

On 2 October 2024, the organizers appealed to the Administrative Tribunal of Lazio requiring the urgent suspension of the ban and the annulment of the decision introducing the ban; on the same day the court refused to suspend the ban on the demonstration on the basis that the vaguely worded “serious disturbance to public order and safety” included in the initial ban was in their view well founded and that the timeline was too tight to carry out an in-depth investigation, thus failing to comply with obligations under international standards which require an effective and timely review. Initially, the Administrative Tribunal had scheduled a hearing for 29 October to discuss the urgent suspension of the ban. However, the organizers' lawyers dropped the appeal regarding the urgent suspension as the date of the trial hearing could not guarantee the effective suspension of the ban. The same administrative court, however, will have to schedule another hearing to discuss the specific circumstances of the ban, and could decide to overturn the ban if it finds that it does not comply with the requirements of the law. As of the date of publication of this statement, a date had not yet been set.

Another demonstration scheduled on 5 October in the city of Turin was also banned by the local head of the Police, on the same non-specific and vaguely worded ground of “risk to public order and safety on the anniversary of the massacre

³ Letter sent on 11 November 2024. The letter was also shared with the Prefect of Rome and the Chief of the State Police.

⁴ <https://www.agi.it/cronaca/news/2024-09-13/piantedosi-su-corteo-pro-palestina-5-ottobre-27831449/>

⁵ Decision of the Head of the Police of Rome regarding the assembly, 24 September 2024. Amnesty International has access to the decision.

⁶ In Italy, numerous demonstrations in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza and in support of Palestine took place without giving rise to concerns but, in some instances, peaceful demonstrators faced excessive or unnecessary force by police or preemptive bans. As an example, on 23 February 2024, riot police intervened violently in two demonstrations in the cities of Florence and Pisa, leading to several people, including children, requiring hospital treatment after being hit by police officers with batons. See: Amnesty International, Europe: Under Protected and Over Restricted: The state of the right to protest in 21 European countries (Index: EUR 01/8199/2024), 8 July 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur01/8199/2024/en/>; In the days leading up to Shoha Victims' Memorial Day on 27 January 2024, a circular issued by the Department of Public Security had invited the heads of the police to consider moving the Palestine demonstrations planned for that day to another date, as requested by the Jewish Community. The Head of the Police of Milan and Rome consequently issued preventive bans on the grounds that the demonstrations could raise tensions with the consequent risk of negative effects on the maintenance of public and social order. See: <https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2024/01/25/manifestazione-pro-palestina-il-ministro-dellinterno-piantedosi-vediamo-se-e-possibile-differire/7422359/>

and abduction of Israelis”, requiring the demonstration to be held on another date and “exclusively as a static gathering.”⁷

In line with regional and international human rights standards, authorities have a duty to respect, as well as actively protect and facilitate people’s rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Authorities must avoid any unwarranted interferences with the exercise of these rights. While limited restrictions are permissible under international human rights law, these may be imposed only under specific circumstances. Any restrictions must be lawful, and necessary and proportionate to the achievement of a legitimate aim. According to the principle that restrictions should be “content-neutral”, they should not generally aim to restrict the message that an assembly seeks to convey. Furthermore, banning a specific assembly pre-emptively must be a measure of last resort and may be justified only when all other less-intrusive restrictions have been shown to be ineffective to achieve the purported aim, on the basis of specific evidence collected through a thorough assessment of the particular assembly.⁸ Amnesty International emphasizes that even if there was evidence that a small number of demonstrators might resort to violence, this would not justify the imposition of a ban on those protesters who had entirely peaceful intentions. The imposition of such a sweeping and far-reaching restriction violates human rights and the phrasing and framing of the preemptive ban risks entrenching and perpetuating racial prejudice and negative stereotyping against people expressing solidarity with Palestinians’ human rights, and hence is discriminatory.

Recently, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression also expressed concerns about a trend in several countries to crack down on protests and critical expression “in a disproportionate and discriminatory manner against Palestinian groups”, citing Italy as one of them.⁹ The UN Special Rapporteur also characterized the blanket bans or pre-emptive bans on demonstrations in support of Palestinian people introduced by several European Governments as “... arbitrary, unfairly equating Palestinian advocacy as antisemitic or in support of terrorism, and discriminatory as no demonstrations in support of Israel appear to have encountered any specific restrictions”.¹⁰

CONCERNS ABOUT UNLAWFUL POLICE CONTROL CHECKS AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Amnesty International was informed that eventually, at around 1.15 pm on 5 October, the same day as the protest was due to take place, the DIGOS (General Investigations and Special Operations Division) verbally communicated to one of the organisers that they could hold the demonstration, but in a static form.¹¹ The organizers immediately shared the information through their social media accounts.¹²

The initial imposition of a ban, coupled with the late timing of the decision to partially lift the ban and to permit a static gathering, significantly curtailed the right to peaceful protest. Many people who might have participated in the demonstration may have decided not to attend a prohibited event, and they would not have known about the late decision to permit a static gathering (or in any case, by that stage, have been able to attend the event). Further, the police went on to impose preventative controls and measures against people travelling to attend the protest thereby jeopardising their human rights including their rights of freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, liberty and freedom of movement.

In the hours leading up to the event, preventive controls and ID checks were established on numerous access routes to the capital Rome, including along the highways and in train stations, as well as within the city of Rome by law enforcement agencies, particularly police, Carabinieri, and DIGOS targeting individuals or groups of people participating in the demonstration or perceived as such. In many cases, stop and search practices at toll booths and train stations led to dozens of people being transferred to police stations and police headquarters for identity checks.

⁷ <https://www.torinotoday.it/attualita/divieto-manifestazioni-pro-palestina-7-ottobre-2024.html>

⁸ UN Human Rights Committee (OHCHR), General Comment No.37: Freedom of Peaceful Assembly (Article 21), 17 September 2020, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/37, para 37.

⁹ Global threats to freedom of expression arising from the conflict in Gaza, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Khan, A/79/319, 23 August 2024, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n24/247/88/pdf/n2424788.pdf>, para. 32.

¹⁰ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Khan (cited above), para. 34.

¹¹ Interview with Ahmed Dawd, member of UDAP (Democratic Arab Palestinian Union) one of the organizers’ groups.

¹² https://www.instagram.com/p/DaveNtQstOY/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==

Based on the testimonies collected by Amnesty International, dozens of activists were held for several hours in various police stations in the capital, without receiving any information about the specific reasons for their detention.

According to domestic law, law enforcement officials can take an individual subject to an identity check to a police station in two specific circumstances: when the person refuses to provide an identity document or when there is sufficient evidence that the person provided false information or documents. According to interviews conducted by Amnesty International with lawyers and protesters who were stopped by the police, neither of those two circumstances applied to dozens of individuals who were subject to identity checks prior to the public assembly.

The police issued many of those stopped with a “presence banning order” (“foglio di via”),¹³ a preventive administrative measure banning an individual from being present in a specific territory other than one’s place of residence. These orders can be imposed by the Head of Police, without judicial scrutiny when the police consider that the “social dangerousness” of certain people may pose a threat to public safety. The “presence banning orders” imposed on the targeted people instructed them to leave Rome within an hour and not to return for between six months and four years.

According to Legislative Decree No. 159/2011, which regulates its enforcement, the application of this measure should be based on compliance with certain specific requirements, including a circumstantial assessment of dangerousness to public safety of the individual concerned. Amnesty International has already criticized in a previous statement¹⁴ the use of this administrative measure since it is based on vague grounds and is imposed by administrative authorities without prior judicial authorization. The “presence banning orders” violate the principles of legality and the presumption of innocence and are at odds with fair trial safeguards and may also violate the rights to liberty and to freedom of movement.

Amnesty International spoke to five people subjected to administrative measures by police on 5 October, as well as their lawyers. They shared how “presence banning orders” were imposed by the Chief of the police on people whose “social dangerousness” was inferred from previous administrative measures or in some cases only from police reports and identifications based on behaviors and actions closely related to the exercise of the right to peaceful protest, such as participation in a banned demonstration or non-violent civil disobedience actions like defacing public monuments.

For example, G., a youth activist interviewed by Amnesty International, was on her way to Rome with a friend at 8:50 a.m. when her bus was stopped at the Fiano Romano toll booth at a police checkpoint. The officer asked all passengers to disembark for an ID check and backpack search. After being selected by the police authorities, with another boy, she was transferred to police headquarters with sirens on. At no time was she asked if she was actually heading to the national demonstration for Palestine. Upon completion of the investigation, the police served her with a mandatory “presence banning order” that required her to leave Rome within one hour and forbids her from returning for six months. The reasons for the order make explicit that her perceived “lifestyle conduct” suggested to the police that she would have committed illegal activities in the City of Rome. Lawyers confirmed to Amnesty International that the order was imposed despite the absence of any criminal or administrative record against her.

Another protester told Amnesty International how she was stopped by police on a bus at Tiburtina station, where she had her identity checked and was then taken to the police station, where she was served a three-year mandatory “presence banning order” indicating “police prejudices” (“police records”) of which she was unaware. Lawyers confirmed to Amnesty International that the order was imposed despite the actual absence of any past and/or ongoing criminal or administrative proceedings against her.

N., a protester heading to Rome in a bus organized by a Palestinian solidarity movement from the north of Italy, said the whole group of 48 activists was stopped at a toll booth north of Rome by 13 police cars and 3 police vans. The group was stopped at around 1.30pm, when the ban on the demonstration had already been lifted; they were held and their ID documents were taken for around ten hours; 14 of them received a “presence banning order”. Amnesty International was informed that none of them had previous criminal records.

¹³ Amnesty International Italia, Fogli di via: strumento di prevenzione o di repressione? , <https://www.amnesty.it/fogli-di-via-strumento-di-prevenzione-o-di-repressione/>

¹⁴ Amnesty International Italia, Fogli di via: strumento di prevenzione o di repressione? (cited above)

In the three cases mentioned above, the protesters appealed the preventive measures to the Administrative Court; hearings will be held in the next weeks.

In other cases, however, law enforcement officers informed some people stopped during control operations that “presence banning orders” would be issued against them, then later informed them that the measure would not be applied if they agreed not to go to the demonstration. This practice constitutes an interference that did, *de facto*, prevented some people from attending the demonstration. Amnesty International is very concerned at the stop and search practices applied on October 5 and at the widespread use of tools such as the “foglio di via” in a manner explicitly aimed at preventing activists from entering designated demonstration sites. Such preventive tools are issued by the head of the police, without judicial review, prior to the commission of crimes or independently of the commission of further crimes and appear to be based on harmful negative stereotyping of people who are demonstrating in support of Palestinian human rights, expressing concern at a risk of genocide in Gaza and to call for accountability for Israel’s violations of international law. While they were initially designed with a specific rationale by the law, such as fighting against organized crime, and are therefore included within the so-called Anti-Mafia Code, “foglio di via” are now increasingly being used as a retaliatory tool against activists to prevent them from exercising their right to peaceful assembly. Amnesty International has previously expressed concerns¹⁵ about how, in recent years, “presence banning orders” have increasingly been used against activists of several movements, grassroots trade union delegates and climate justice activists with the aim to hinder their activities and silence their dissent.

Restrictions of peaceful protesters’ freedom of movement, including for the purpose of identity checks, must be lawful, necessary and proportionate. In the absence of lawful grounds, such restrictions can amount to an arbitrary deprivation of liberty. This is also the case when such restrictions result directly from the exercise of other rights, including peaceful assembly.

The apprehension and removal of protesters to police stations raises concerns regarding the right to liberty and, for many individuals, appears to have been unlawful given that neither of the two legal grounds noted above (refusal to provide an identity document, or evidence of false documentation) were satisfied and their removal seems to have been aimed primarily at preventing the exercise of the right to protest peacefully. This also amounts to an unnecessary and disproportionate interference, one that further acts as a deterrent to potential protesters. While numerous police control checks were taking place on the access roads into Rome and inside the city in the direction of the assembly site, a variety of social media accounts began spreading the news reported by the organizers¹⁶ that the authorities had finally lifted the ban on the event, on the condition that it would become a static gathering near the Piramide metro station in central Rome. Testimonies from activists who were stopped by police before reaching the demonstration or while entering the demonstration area suggest that the lack of clarity about the retraction of the ban may have caused confusion amongst law enforcement officials about the facilitation of the event.

According to Amnesty International’s observers’ team members and testimonies collected, the square in front of Piramide metro station was surrounded by police authorities in its entirety with limited access both in and out throughout the day. This made it especially difficult for participants to exit from the area and according to accounts of activists and members of the observers’ team, the police conducted ID checks on most of the participants entering the area.

VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY, INCLUDING UNWARRANTED DISPERSAL AND USE OF UNLAWFUL FORCE AGAINST PEACEFUL PROTESTERS

Amnesty International is concerned that the police breached the right to freedom of peaceful assembly by dispersing the largely peaceful demonstration and misusing less lethal weapons including tear gas, water cannons and police batons.

¹⁵ Amnesty International Italia, Fogli di via: strumento di prevenzione o di repressione? (cited above)

¹⁶ https://www.instagram.com/p/DAveNtQstOY/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==

The organization understands that after the organizers of the static gathering announced that it had ended, police responded to attempts by a small group of protesters to break through the police cordon, and to clashes between this group and the police, by using water cannons and teargas.

According to Amnesty International's observers' team members as well as footage analyzed by Amnesty International, the police did not attempt to de-escalate and specifically deal on an individual basis with anyone throwing objects or engaging in violent conduct but rather started to use watercannons and fire teargas directly into the crowd of demonstrators, without prior warning. The intense use of teargas, at a time when there was no widespread violence, resulted in confusion among protesters, as people could not disperse easily due to the police having limited and controlled entry/exit points to the demonstration area.

Successively, again without any advance announcement, the anti-riot police started carrying out baton charges in an apparent attempt to disperse the demonstrators, hitting anyone within their reach, including people who were not engaged in violence. Footage reviewed by the researchers shows a group of protesters - who are peaceful at that time and appear to present no threat - being pushed by police officers towards a traffic island and being hit by batons while falling to the ground and other protesters facing baton charges and falling to the ground while simply backing away from the police.

In addition, in an apparent attempt to disperse protesters from the square, the police advanced with batons and with the use of two water cannons and several police trucks, while firing teargas including towards peaceful demonstrators seeking to leave the square. Amnesty International observers said that the authorities did not announce their intention to disperse the assembly or to use weapons and did not attempt to give any time for people who wanted to leave to be able to do so. The police pushed back the protesters who crowded into the space enclosed by police trucks and walls which impeded the protestors from being able to safely exit the area. According to the observers' team, some protesters were stuck at exits unable to leave, some of them resorting to climbing over the gates in desperation to flee the teargas and use of water cannons. The exit points were kept closed by the police during the dispersal operation, then subsequently small gates opened but they were not adequately sized for large numbers of people to flow out. The gates were finally opened when the police operation ended.

The organization believes that the police denial of sufficient entry/exit gates for protesters to leave easily and safely and/or failure of public order managers to signpost the exits jeopardised the safety of protesters who found themselves in a confined space with no clear, safe or adequate means to exit the location.

Amnesty International is further concerned that during the dispersal, the police treated the media and observers as if they were participants in the assembly, rather than independent monitors. Everyone has the right to observe, monitor and report on assemblies and journalists and observers must be facilitated in their work so as to be able to carry out the monitoring without interference. Dispersal of an assembly does not terminate the right to monitor and law enforcement officials should not interfere with the monitoring merely because of the assembly being dispersed.

Amnesty International wishes to note that its observers' team saw at least 10 protesters who had sustained injuries. Media reports also refer to three protesters and a journalist being injured¹⁷. According to police sources, 30 police officers were also injured.

According to international standards, the general approach of the authorities during demonstrations should be communication-driven, seeking to prevent conflicts from arising through dialogue and mediation, and to mitigate and peacefully resolve conflicts that might occur, through de-escalation techniques.

Amnesty International recalls that an assembly must be considered "peaceful" even in the presence of sporadic violence by some individuals. The possibility that a peaceful assembly may provoke adverse or even violent reactions from some

¹⁷ Le foto e i video degli scontri a Roma - Il Post, <https://www.ilpost.it/2024/10/05/foto-video-scontri-roma-manifestazione-palestina/>

participants is not in itself a sufficient reason to ban or restrict, or proceed with the dispersal of the assembly, and authorities must ensure that those who remain peaceful can continue to exercise their rights without the entire assembly being restricted or dispersed.

Moreover, authorities may only disperse an assembly as a last resort, when there is a pressing need, and all other means have failed to achieve a legitimate objective. In case of violence, police should first focus on violent individuals and prevent violence from spreading, instead of dispersing the entire assembly. Participants must be given the opportunity to disperse voluntarily without the use of force by police. The obligations of the authorities (both negative and positive) also extend to those seeking to leave an assembly after it has formally ended.

Before using any force, police must give a prior warning that they intend to use force, giving sufficient time for people to respond to the warning. Further, weapons with indiscriminate effects (such as tear gas) should not be used unless necessary and proportionate in circumstances of widespread violence against persons and when it is no longer possible to contain the violence by dealing with the individuals engaged in violence alone. Tear gas should never be fired directly at people and may only be used in the open space, where it is easy for people to leave. Water cannons may only be used to disperse protesters if it is lawful, strictly necessary and proportionate in case of widespread violence. They should not be deployed against protesters merely for non-compliance with an order to disperse, and any deployment should be to the minimum extent possible, following a clear warning that allows sufficient time to comply. Similarly, the use of batons – striking self-defence weapons (or for defence of another person) – must be preceded by a clear warning, and in any case must never be used to disperse a peaceful assembly. So-called “baton charges”, with police running after people to hit whoever gets within reach, are an unlawful use of force and must be prohibited. Batons may only be used in a targeted response to violent people or a threat of imminent violence.

In the aftermath of the demonstration, Italy’s Minister of Interior reaffirmed that the decision on the ban was right, because “based on objective elements” it allowed the law enforcement authorities to “prevent handfuls of violent people from getting even more easily mixed up in a significantly larger demonstration to achieve the only real goal of expressing violence”.¹⁸

The insistence of the Ministry of Interior that a pre-emptive ban was an appropriate response to an identified risk of violence by a “handful” of individuals - notwithstanding the fact that the vast majority of protesters remained entirely peaceful - is at odds with international human rights law which instead underscores the obligation of the authorities to uphold the right of peaceful assembly of those who have peaceful intentions. The statement issued by the Minister also completely fails to acknowledge the unlawful use of force by police against peaceful protesters.¹⁹

Italy is among the few countries in Europe that have no requirements for law enforcement officers to wear individual identification badges when performing official duties. The mandatory wearing of identification badges would provide an important safeguard against the illegal use of force by police forces and help ensure that those who act in violation of international standards do not go unpunished. Amnesty International reiterates its call on the authorities to adopt legislation in line with international standards that would require the use of clearly visible alphanumeric identification codes on the uniforms of officers engaged in public order activities.²⁰

BACKGROUND

On 7 October 2023, Hamas and other armed groups carried out attacks into southern Israel which included deliberate killings of civilians, launching of indiscriminate rockets and the taking of hostages. Shortly afterwards, the Israeli army began a campaign of massive bombardment and then a ground offensive which has included indiscriminate attacks and direct attacks on civilians and civilian objects. The scale of civilian casualties and extent of destruction and damages to homes, health care and infrastructure is unprecedented. Subsequently, people in Europe, including in Italy, have been taking to the streets to demand a ceasefire and protest against war crimes, crimes against humanity and the risk of genocide in Gaza and Israel’s system of apartheid over Palestinians.²¹ Amnesty International has observed a

¹⁸ Interview of the Minister of Interior, *Il Messaggero*, 7 October 2024, <https://www.interno.gov.it/stampa-e-comunicazione/interventi-e-interviste/chi-cavalca-crisi-e-mira-destabilizzare-giusto-vietare-corteo>

¹⁹ Interview of the Minister of Interior, *Il Messaggero*, 7 October 2024 (cited above)

²⁰ Petition launched by Amnesty International Italy for a law on identification codes for police forces, <https://www.amnesty.it/appelli/inserire-subito-i-codici-identificativi/>

²¹ Under Protected and Over Restricted: The State of the Right to Protest in 21 European Countries, (cited above), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur01/8199/2024/en/>, pp.97-100.

worrying pattern and increase in disproportionate restrictions being imposed in many European countries in relation to demonstrations expressing solidarity with Palestinian people which has raised further concerns regarding the failures of European countries to combat racism and all other forms of discrimination.²²

Amnesty International will continue to monitor, where necessary with its human rights observers, demonstrations scheduled for the coming weeks and months on a range of issues including some connected to Palestinian solidarity, also in light of its concerns already expressed about the implementation, if and when it will be approved, of Bill 1660 “Provisions on public security.”²³

In fact, several provisions of the bill, recently approved by the Chamber of Deputies and now being discussed at the Italian Senate, could have a serious chilling effect on people's exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the right to peaceful assembly and acts of non-violent civil disobedience. The draft provisions include increasing criminal sanctions for occupation of public or private properties and for roadblocks and disruption of traffic and extending the use of preventive administrative measures.

The bill has received severe criticism from Italian and international human rights groups, including OSCE's ODIHR office, which published a detailed legal opinion in May 2024 expressing concerns about the non-compliance of several of the bill's provisions with international human rights standards and OSCE commitments.²⁴

²² Under Protected and Over Restricted: The State of the Right to Protest in 21 European Countries (cited above), pp. 97-100.

²³ Amnesty International Italia, Ddl sicurezza: ulteriori preoccupazioni per l'impatto sui diritti umani, 4 Giugno 2024, <https://www.amnesty.it/ddl-sicurezza-ulteriori-preoccupazioni-per-limpatto-sui-diritti-umani/>

²⁴ ODIHR, Opinion on Certain Articles of the Bill No. 1660 relating to Counter Terrorism, Public Security, Protection of Personnel in Service and Prison Regulations, Italy, Warsaw, 27 May 2024 Opinion-Nr.: SSR-GEN-IT/497/2024 [TN], https://legislationline.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/2024-05-27 - Opinion_Italy_Draft Law on Public Security - final.pdf