

Amnesty International

Oral statement on the outcome on Morocco under the Universal Periodic Review

9 June 2008

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Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the recommendations made by several states to Morocco, including to implement the recommendations of the Equity and Reconciliation Commission, to ensure respect for the human rights of migrants, to harmonize domestic law with international standards, and to ratify international human rights treaties.

Amnesty International would like to build on some of the recommendations made during the review as well as on issues which could have been approached in a more forceful manner.

One key concern is the apparent lack of accountability of the security forces for alleged abuses, including torture and excessive use of force, in cases of persons suspected of terrorist offences, of Sahrawi persons advocating against Moroccan rule in Western Sahara; and for the killing or arrest and detention of migrants attempting to reach European shores. In some cases, investigations were opened, but their outcome is still pending. In other cases, mostly those that are politically sensitive, no investigation seems to have taken place.

During the review, concerns about freedom of the press and prosecutions against journalists were expressed by several states; however, the wider restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly were not addressed. Sahrawi human rights activists continue to be arrested for their advocacy of the right to self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

Mr. President,

The lack of investigations into abuses by the security forces contributes to unfair trials. In this regard, the recommendations of the Equity and Reconciliation Commission to reform the state security organs and the justice system, and to strengthen human rights legislation must be urgently implemented. The fact that the death penalty has not yet

been abolished, and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court not yet ratified, as recommended by the Equity and Reconciliation Commission, puts into question the political will of the Moroccan authorities to implement these reforms. Amnesty International urges the government to take swift action on these issues.

Thank you Mr. President.

MORE INFORMATION

- See a representative from Amnesty International deliver this statement at the Human Rights Council. Watch the video on:
<rtsp://webcast.un.org/ondemand/conferences/unhrc/eighth/hrc080609pm2-eng.rm?start=01:11:34&end=01:13:19>
and:
<rtsp://webcast.un.org/ondemand/conferences/unhrc/eighth/hrc080609pm2-eng.rm?start=01:15:05&end=01:15:54>
(UN webcast - www.un.org)
- This oral statement is based on a written statement prepared by Amnesty International to the 8th session of the Human Rights Council. See the statement at: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE29/010/2008/en>