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### **Pakistan: Refugees at risk at Chaman staging camp**

*Amnesty International is highly concerned about the location and conditions of the Chaman staging camp on the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The refugees there should be transferred immediately to safer locations further away from the border, the organization says.*

*The staging camp is located merely a few hundred meters from the border area -- extremely worrying given UN standards that refugee camps should be placed a reasonable distance from any conflict area.*

*Amnesty International has received reports from Chaman that the Taleban have been present in the camp. For those fleeing the Taleban, this means that they are not finding the safe haven they require.*

*The staging camp is meant to be a temporary solution. However, as time progresses, Amnesty International is worried that adequate alternatives have not been found. Even those other sites which UNHCR and the government of Pakistan are preparing for new arrivals do not meet required standards.*

*"The staging camp at Chaman has already reached capacity. We urge that the authorities transfer those refugees presently at Chaman to proper alternative locations away from the border."*

*The camp at Chaman highlights the risks inherent in placing refugees in other locations also close to the border.*

*The government of Pakistan still insists on maintaining a closed border, only letting the few Afghans the authorities consider to be vulnerable across. The closed border forces refugees to pay for smugglers*

*and use informal travel routes. This raises the risk that those who are in need of protection, such as the impoverished, single women, the elderly and children, may not be able to cross the border and receive assistance.*

*Amnesty International calls on the government of Pakistan to open the border immediately and ensure that those Afghans in need of protection are given refugee status.*

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For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566 or in Pakistan on mobile phone +47 911 00 6764 or +92 300 9500240.

Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW web : <http://www.amnesty.org>