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News Flash

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Russian Federation: Attacks on civilians are unjustifiable

Amnesty International strongly condemns the latest suicide bombings in Moscow which took the life of at least 16 civilians and injured many others.

"Attacks on civilians are unjustifiable," the organization said today. "We reiterate our call on the leaders of all armed groups to end attacks on civilians immediately."

In the afternoon of 5 July two female suicide bombers blew themselves up at a rock concert in Moscow. Nobody has yet claimed responsibility for the attack. In the immediate aftermath, the Russian authorities laid the blame on Chechen rebels and today, President Putin said he will take harsh measures against them.

"The Russian government has the responsibility to safeguard the security of all its citizens, including the Chechens. However, part and parcel of maintaining security is the protection of human rights and the rule of law," the organization said.

Background

In the aftermath of the hostage-taking incident in a Moscow theatre last October, Chechens and other people from the Caucasus living in the rest of the Russian Federation have experienced increasing levels of racist attacks and police harassment.

The conflict in the Chechen Republic has been characterized by serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. Amnesty International has researched numerous, consistent and credible reports that Russian forces have been responsible for widespread human rights violations such as 'disappearances', extrajudicial executions and torture, including rape.

Chechen forces are also reported to have committed human rights abuses, including hostage-taking, killing captured Russian soldiers and targeting civilian members of the Chechen administration.

Public Document

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566
Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW. web: <http://www.amnesty.org>

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