

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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International Migrants Day

On the occasion of today's International Migrants' Day (18 December), Amnesty International reiterates its concern about the plight of millions of migrants around the world who are denied access to their fundamental human rights.

This year, the vulnerability of migrants has been exacerbated significantly in the case of "irregular" or "undocumented" migrants. Amnesty International has raised concerns about plans of the government of Malaysia to collectively expel up to one million "irregular" migrants.

Large-scale expulsions have also occurred in Europe. In October 2004, the expulsion of hundreds of people of African and Middle Eastern origin to Libya from the small Italian island of Lampedusa in Italy raised important questions about the Italian government's determination to address migration challenges, no matter what the cost to human rights.

Amnesty International urges all states to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families ("the Migrant Workers Convention"). The Convention, which came into force in July 2003, provides that all migrants, irrespective of their immigration status, should be able to enjoy certain fundamental rights. These include the right to be free from torture, the right to equality before the law and in conditions of work, and the right to urgent medical care. So far, 27 states have ratified the convention.

For further information on the cases mentioned above please see:

Malaysia: Human rights at risk in mass deportation of undocumented migrants

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engasa280082004>

Italy: Government must ensure access to asylum for those in need of

protection<http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engeur300012004>

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