

12 February 2007

Immigration

As part of the cooperation that it has promoted since 2004 to ensure the 'external dimension' of its immigration and asylum policy, the European Union uses its southern neighbours, regardless of whether they are migrants' countries of origin or of transit, to delegate the protection of its own borders to them.

Between 23 and 29 December 2006, Moroccan security forces conducted large-scale round-ups in Rabat, Nador and Laayoune of between 439 and 479 migrants, including pregnant women and children, before transporting them to the Algerian border near Oujda and abandoning them there in small groups.

Libya, regularly singled out for human rights violations perpetrated on its territory, is becoming one of the main EU subcontractors for the sifting of migrants who have come from southern Africa. Morocco is considered a privileged partner of the EU in the fight against illegal immigration, at a time when the principles contained in the Geneva Convention on refugees, which it has ratified, are not respected on its soil, and when the UNHCR is not in a position to assure the protection of people to whom it has granted the right to international protection in Morocco, despite the fact that the EU has allocated EUR 40 million to the MEDA 'border control management' programme, that no measures have been taken to ensure that Morocco fully abides by its international obligations and that Morocco justifies these round-ups in the light of the commitments it has made with the EU.

Does the Council intend to condemn these human rights violations and contraventions of the Geneva Convention?

What does the Council intend to do to ensure that the EU's partners fully respect international obligations on human rights and the rights of refugees in the context of managing the EU's external borders?

Answer:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2007-0548&language=EN>