

# EGYPT/SUDAN

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS FACE BRUTAL TREATMENT, KIDNAPPING FOR RANSOM, AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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# MAP OF THE TRAFFICKING ROUTE



*Names and boundary representation do not necessarily constitute endorsement by Amnesty International.*

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Amnesty International is greatly concerned for the safety and security of refugees and asylum-seekers held captive in the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt, after being kidnapped in and around the Shagarab refugee camps in eastern Sudan. In Sinai they are subjected to brutal violence and inhuman treatment during attempts to extract ransom payments from their families.

Amnesty International has received numerous reports since 2011 of kidnappings of Shagarab camp residents, with further incidents of kidnapping occurring in January this year. Most of those kidnapped have been forcibly taken out of Sudan over the border into Egypt, in most cases to the Sinai region. The majority of the victims report that they are sold between different criminal groups along the route.

In the Sinai they are held captive while ransom payments are extorted from their relatives. According to testimonies and information received by Amnesty International, during their captivity they are subjected to acts of extreme violence and brutality, including rape of men and women and other forms of sexual violence. Some of those who are unable to pay a ransom are killed. Some die as a result of ill-treatment or the terrible conditions of their captivity.

In January 2013, incidents of kidnapping in the Shagarab camps sparked a violent incident between refugees angered at the ongoing crimes and members of the Rashaida tribe, who are widely reported, by victims and camps residents, to be responsible for the kidnappings. For over two years, kidnappings of refugees and asylum-seekers have been taking place in and around Shagarab – a constellation of three refugee camps in eastern Sudan, near the border with Eritrea. Amnesty International has also received many reports of kidnappings of newly arrived asylum-seekers just inside Sudan's eastern border with Eritrea and Ethiopia.

The significant majority of the victims are Eritrean refugees and asylum-seekers, who make up the vast majority of the population of the Shagarab camps.<sup>1</sup> A number of Ethiopian refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants are also among the victims. Reports suggest that a small number of Sudanese have also been affected. The kidnappings are reportedly carried out by criminal networks made up of local tribesmen, often with the help of Eritrean individuals and the complicity or involvement of members of the Sudanese security services.<sup>2</sup> There are also allegations of the involvement of Eritrean officials in trafficking people from Eritrea to Sudan and Egypt.<sup>3</sup>

This briefing does not cover all aspects of this highly complex situation, but lays out some of the central human rights concerns pertaining to the severe abuses faced by refugees and asylum-seekers occurring in Sudan and Egypt, and includes recommendations on vital, urgent efforts that must be made to bring an end to these crimes.

## 2. KIDNAPPINGS FOR RANSOM IN EAST SUDAN

According to information received by Amnesty International, on the evening of 21 January 2013, two women, an Ethiopian and an Eritrean, were kidnapped on their way back from visiting a friend in a hospital in a local town. The two women were travelling in the local form of transport - known as a "caro" - when armed men stopped the vehicle, and seized them. The following morning, on 22 January 2013, two Eritrean women living in the Shagarab camps set out to go to church, but did not arrive at their destination. Camp residents believe they were kidnapped.

Amnesty International has received reports of kidnappings and of individuals going missing from the Shagarab camps and the surrounding area since early 2011. Reports indicate that in addition to kidnappings of people moving around within the camp and its environs, people are also being taken from their homes in the camp. Residents of the camps have reported hearing screams at night, which, they reported, they later found to have been from asylum-seekers and refugees in neighbouring huts whom Rashaida tribesmen were attempting to kidnap.

There have also been numerous reports of individuals being kidnapped in the area near the border, either before they reach the camps or after they leave in search of better protection and economic opportunities not available in the camps. Amnesty International has also received reports of people being seized near the UNHCR reception centre in Kassala town.

The UNHCR reports that kidnapping incidents in eastern Sudan have increased over the last two years. In 2011 and 2012 UNHCR verified 396 cases of kidnapping which were reported to have taken place along the borders, in the refugee camps and after leaving the camps to travel to Khartoum and onwards. In 2012 UNHCR stated that their eastern Sudan office in Kassala received reports of between 30 and 50 cases a month of people claiming to have been kidnapped at the border between Eritrea and Sudan. These were all individuals who had been caught by the police in Sudan.<sup>4</sup> However, the UNHCR also reported that comprehensive data on incidents is not available. Incidents that occur near the borders or after asylum-seekers have left the Shagarab camps are only reported to UNHCR if people present at the incidents manage to evade kidnap and reach or return to Shagarab to make a report. The reports that the UNHCR does receive are often second, third or fourth hand information. Information is difficult to verify unless victims are freed whilst still in Sudan. The true number of kidnappings from eastern Sudan is therefore likely to be considerably higher than the verified figure.

Information from UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicates that newly arrived asylum-seekers face a higher risk of being kidnapped than those who have been living at the camps for a longer period of time. Recent arrivals are reported to be more unwilling to stay within the confines of the camps, and in recent years many attempt to leave as soon as they obtain their refugee documents. A local source told Amnesty International that many of the victims are younger women. Victims also include unaccompanied children.

Many survivors of kidnapping and trafficking into the Sinai who were freed and entered Israel, have told Israeli human rights organizations that members of the Sudanese security forces stationed on the border between Eritrea and Sudan were involved in handing them over or selling them to the traffickers, or turned a blind eye when they were seized.<sup>5</sup> Further, residents in the camps told Amnesty International that they were afraid to seek help from the Sudanese National Security Service (NSS) in the camps, as they did not trust the role of the NSS in the kidnappings.

In its July 2012 report, the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea documented the involvement of Eritrean officials, including some senior military figures, in trafficking people out of Eritrea to Sudan and on to Egypt.<sup>6</sup>



### 3. LACK OF SAFETY AND SECURITY IN SHAGARAB CAMPS

Following the incidents on 21 and 22 January, angered by the ongoing and frequent occurrence of kidnappings and concerned by the lack of safety, a number of refugees and asylum-seekers in the camp used sticks to attack members of a local tribe – the Rashaida – who were present in the camps' market. Members of the Rashaida tribe are widely reported to be responsible for the kidnappings.<sup>7</sup> In response to the attack, armed Rashaida tribesmen reportedly opened fire at the crowd, severely injuring at least three people. Reports indicate that eight Rashaida tribesmen were also injured in the fighting. All the injured were transferred to hospitals in Kassala or Khartoum.

On the same day, after some delay, the Sudanese authorities deployed two military units and two additional police units to support the local police, which restored calm in the camp. Amnesty International received reports that the following day 70 vehicles carrying armed men, who the refugees identified as belonging to the Rashaida tribe, attempted to enter the camps. They were prevented from doing so by the Sudanese army and police units who had been sent to the camps to deal with the violence.

These incidents and the escalated hostility between the Rashaida and the camps' inhabitants have led to an increased sense of insecurity for the refugees and asylum-seekers in the camps. Residents in the camps have also expressed a serious lack of trust of the Sudanese authorities and most do not consider themselves protected in the refugee camps. A refugee who has lived in the camp since 1987 told Amnesty International: "It used to be that we didn't feel safe at night, but now they're even targeting us during broad day light", alluding to the kidnappers.

The UNHCR estimates that approximately 3,000 individuals enter Sudan from Eritrea every month. Up until May 2012 an average of 2,000 each month were seeking asylum in the Shagarab camps, where asylum-seekers undergo a refugee status determination procedure and are issued with documentation. Since May 2012 the numbers of registered new arrivals at the camp have dropped dramatically. A resident in the camps told Amnesty International that the threat of kidnapping at Shagarab is deterring individuals from seeking protection there.

## 4. TRAFFICKING ACROSS BORDERS

Many refugees and asylum-seekers kidnapped in Sudan become the victims of human trafficking, being sold between different criminal groups along the route.<sup>8</sup> In most cases they are forcibly transported to the Sinai region of Egypt.

Trafficking victims who were kidnapped by other actors than Rashaida tribesmen – corrupt members of the Sudanese security forces or other Eritrean and Sudanese nationals, reported that they were soon sold to Rashaida criminal gangs. Subsequently, in the vast majority of cases, trafficking victims reported that they were sold between different Rashaida groups in Sudan, who subsequently sold them to Bedouin criminal networks in Egypt. According to survivors' reports, most of the trafficking gangs in Sinai are Bedouin.

Many of those kidnapped have reported that they were initially held captive in eastern Sudan while other people were seized and brought to form groups. During this captivity in eastern Sudan they are subjected to violence, including beatings and rape, and cruel treatment, including deprivation of food and water, by their captors. The groups are then forcibly transported in harrowing journeys that last for several weeks.

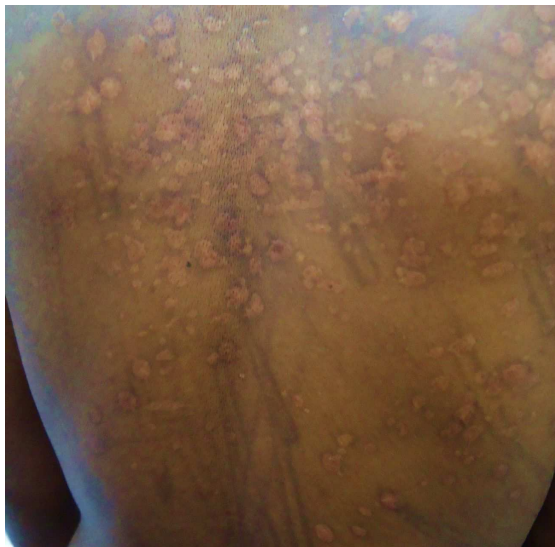
According to testimonies of survivors, during the journeys refugees and asylum-seekers receive very little food or water. They are usually transported in severely overcrowded conditions in trucks and other vehicles, often with poor ventilation. Some reported that their fellow travellers died during the journeys as a result of suffocation, malnutrition and/or dehydration. Once they reach Sinai, they are held captive with the aim of extorting money from their relatives or communities. Some people reported being sold to different criminal groups within Sinai during their captivity. Amnesty International has received some reports of people being sold even after a ransom has been paid to secure their release. A large number of reports indicate that captives are held in compounds in the northeast of the Sinai Peninsula. In some cases journalists have interviewed victims who reported that they had escaped from compounds in al-Mahadia, near Rafah.<sup>9</sup>

Many refugees and asylum-seekers fleeing Eritrea and Ethiopia, as well as migrants from the region, engage people-smugglers to transport them out of their countries and to various destinations around the region, in search of protection, better security or better economic opportunities.<sup>10</sup> Fees of between 1,000 and 5,000 USD have often been reported as the price charged by smugglers to facilitate passage. Over the last two years, Amnesty International has received a number of reports of cases where the smugglers also ended up holding individuals captive for ransom or selling them to other trafficking criminal groups for the purposes of extortion.

Information available to Amnesty International indicates that there is an extensive network of criminal groups which include smugglers and traffickers operating through Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt. They are reportedly heavily-armed. In addition, the networks include agents that collect the ransom money in countries including Israel, Saudi Arabia, the US, and throughout Europe.

## 5. CAPTIVITY AND BRUTAL TREATMENT IN SINAI

According to information and testimonies received by Amnesty International, many people held captive in Sinai have been subjected to extreme violence and brutality while waiting for the ransom to be procured and paid by their families.<sup>11</sup> Most commonly reported methods of violent treatment include beatings with various objects such as metal chains, sticks and whips; burning with cigarette butts or heated rubber and metal objects; suspension from the ceiling and suspension in contorted positions for prolonged periods of time; pouring gasoline over the body and setting it on fire; and being forced to stand for extended periods of time in desert heat. Some victims have reported that they were given electric shocks, or had seen others held captive with them subjected to electric shocks. Others reported being urinated on and having finger nails pulled out. Rape of men and women, and other forms of sexual violence have been frequently reported.



Scars on the back of an Eritrean man who reported being beaten and being burnt with molten plastic while held captive in Sinai

©Amnesty International

This brutal treatment is apparently at least in part intended to increase the urgency of captives' pleas to relatives to pay the money to secure their release.

Those held captive in Sinai have also reportedly been deprived of food, water, medical treatment and showers for prolonged periods. Many former captives also reported being chained throughout the duration of their captivity, often to other captives. Some have allegedly been murdered because their families were unable to pay the ransom, or to demonstrate to the families of other captives the seriousness of the threats.

Others are reported to have died as a result of the harsh treatment and conditions in which they were held captive.

One survivor from Eritrea, held captive in Sinai for eight months after being kidnapped from Shagarab camp in February 2012, described his ordeal to Amnesty International:

*“We were 16 people – 13 Eritreans and 3 Ethiopians. Once we first arrived inside the house in Sinai, we were asked for money. One guy from Ethiopia said straight away that he won't be able to pay. They [the captors] wanted to make him an example; so they undressed him in front of us and started beating and poking him with big wooden sticks. They then inserted a stick into his anus. He was bleeding all over. After more beatings, they poured petrol on him and set him on fire. After he died, they left his body in the room with us until it became rotten and worms started crawling. They forced all of us in turns to hold him”.*

He described the daily abuse suffered by the captives, including severe beatings, suspension in contorted positions, rape of men and women, and burning with cigarettes, matches and ignited gasoline, including on genital areas.

Another survivor, a 17-year-old boy from Eritrea, told Amnesty International that he was seized from the outskirts of Kassala together with a friend in January 2012 by a group of armed Rashaida tribesmen. After a journey of several weeks in harsh conditions, he ended up as a captive in Sinai, in what he described to be an unfinished building. He said that initially there were around 45 people held captive with him, but the number varied during the length of his captivity as some people were freed and more people were brought into the group. He told Amnesty International that all those held captive suffered severe abuses. He said that during his eight months of captivity, he witnessed seven people die as a result of murder, severely violent treatment, or harsh conditions. He described those conditions:

*“We were all held in one room; and given two pieces of plain bread per day. We were chained to each other with metal chains; about four-five people together. Some of them [the captors] forced us to stay completely naked, either standing or sitting. Not once was I allowed to shower. For the toilet, there was a bucket in the room and we were allowed to use it once a day. They would only unchain us to torture us like suspend us from the ceiling... Usually, I was beaten with wooden sticks all over the body or with metal wires. Sometimes, they would tie my hands and suspend me from the ceiling for hours. Sometimes, they would also put a wire on my fingers and give me electric shocks. During the torture, they make us call our families... They raped the women in front of us in the same room; it happened almost every day. Some of them [the captors] would tell us to look down, while they were doing it.”*

He was freed once his community paid USD 27,000. Months after his release, there were visible scars on his ankles, compatible with his testimony of being chained for eight months.



The ankle of a 17-year-old Eritrean boy showing the scars he said came from months of being chained by his captors in Sinai

©Amnesty International

Relatives of two of the four women kidnapped from Shagarab on 21 January 2013 reported that they have received phone calls from the victims to say they are being held captive in the Sinai, Egypt, and that their captors are demanding ransom money.

One of the women kidnapped on 21 January called her family on 10 February. She told them she had been kidnapped by Rashaida tribesmen, who are asking for USD 30,000 for her release. Her mother told Amnesty International:

*“My daughter was crying and asking for help. She told me I had five days left to try and find USD 30,000 or else they will kill her. Not only do we not have the money to pay them, we don’t even have money to feed her children”.*

Since this conversation, the woman’s mother – who had come to Shagarab camps from Eritrea to take responsibility for her daughter’s children, after the kidnapping left them without a guardian – returned to Eritrea and Amnesty International was not able to communicate with her further. The fate of her daughter is unknown.

The wife of an Eritrean man kidnapped earlier in January 2013 told Amnesty International that she had received a similar phone call. The man was kidnapped near his home in the camps, on the morning of 10 January. According to a child who witnessed the incident, four armed men seized and forced him into their car. Twelve days later he called his wife and told her that he was being held captive in Sinai and that he was being beaten and tortured. His kidnapers were asking for USD 40,000. They threatened to kill him if they did not receive the money.

His wife told Amnesty International:

*“His parents are dead, his three sisters died in the [Eritrea-Ethiopia] war, he has no one but me. I don't have any money; I can barely feed my four children. I don't know what to do any more”.*

Amnesty International has received information that another Eritrean woman, who was kidnapped from the Shagarab area in early January 2013 and forcibly transferred to Sinai, died on 13 February 2013 as a result of brutal treatment. The woman was an amputee and her prosthetic leg came off when she was forcibly seized and she was forced to leave it behind. She reportedly told her kidnappers that she had no way of paying them so they ‘might as well do what they want with her.’ The woman was reportedly subjected to severe beatings, had her tongue burnt with cigarettes, and was deprived of water and food. Another woman held captive with her informed her own relatives in Shagarab of the death during a phone call, in order to pass the message on to the woman’s relatives.

At the end of February 2013, an Eritrean activist recorded a phone call she made to an eight-year-old girl and her father, currently captive in Sinai. The girl described being “beaten with sticks and fire” and being fed “one bread every two days.” She has reportedly already seen three people die during their captivity. Her father told the activist how his daughter cried for 24 hours after watching her mother being subjected to electric shocks. He said he, his wife and daughter were forcibly seized in eastern Sudan at the beginning of January 2013, and were sold between three different groups between Kassala and Sinai.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, victims of kidnapping and trafficking, including young children, freed in January and February 2013 who managed to reach Cairo, were brutally treated and raped while being held captive in Sinai. Some paid up to 40,000 USD as ransom for their release.

People who have been victims of kidnapping, trafficking and inhuman treatment in Sinai often end up in Israel, Egypt or Ethiopia after being freed. The majority of Sinai victims are currently located in Israel.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The trafficking route currently runs from Eritrea through Ethiopia and Sudan into Egypt. The majority of victims of abuses in Sinai who have been freed are now in Israel, while some are in Egypt and a smaller number are in Ethiopia. The number of individuals entering Israel dramatically decreased with the completion of the Israeli-Egyptian border fence and the implementation of the Prevention of Infiltration Law from June 2012.

Countries along the route must significantly improve national efforts to combat abuses against migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees, and must increase their engagement with United Nations and International Organization for Migration initiatives to tackle kidnapping and human trafficking in the region.

### SUDAN

Amnesty International acknowledges the efforts taken to date by the Sudanese authorities to address the issue of kidnappings from the Shagarab camps, including the arrests and prosecution of some suspects. However, the organization is alarmed by the continuing kidnappings in and around the Shagarab camps, and at the apparently inadequate safety and security provision in the camps which exacerbates the residents' vulnerability to kidnapping and trafficking. Also of particular concern are the allegations of the involvement or complicity of members of the Sudanese National Security Service in the kidnapping and trafficking of refugees and asylum-seekers.

#### **Amnesty International calls on the Government of Sudan to:**

Amnesty International calls on the Sudanese authorities,<sup>12</sup> in collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration and UN agencies working to address this issue, as well as other regional and international agencies, to:

- Ensure the security of refugees and asylum-seekers in Sudan, and those at risk of abuse by traffickers and criminal groups on the way into, through and out of Sudan. Measures taken should include as a priority the immediate development and implementation of sustained and adequate security measures in the Shagarab refugee camps and near the UNHCR reception centre in Kassala;
- Expedite the passing of national anti-trafficking legislation, currently at draft stage, to establish trafficking as a criminal offence and to provide other substantial measures to combat trafficking. These should include measures to strengthen law enforcement response and sensitize policing and immigration personnel to trafficking issues, as well as measures relating to the protection and support of victims of trafficking;



- Conduct prompt, effective and impartial investigations into all allegations of the involvement or complicity of members of the Sudanese security forces in the kidnapping of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants. Where sufficient admissible evidence is found, individuals must be charged and tried in proceedings which comply with international fair trial standards without recourse to the death penalty;
- Make significant efforts to bring all persons involved in the crimes of kidnapping and human trafficking to justice;
- Ensure that asylum-seekers who have been victims of trafficking are given access to fair and effective asylum procedures and are protected from forcible return while their asylum procedure is ongoing.

## EGYPT

The Egyptian government is obliged to protect anyone within its territory or under its jurisdiction from trafficking, violence and cruel treatment and other abuses.<sup>13</sup>

In Egypt, victims of abuses in Sinai, along with other asylum-seekers, continue to be detained for immigration offences. Detention for immigration control purposes should only be imposed in the most exceptional circumstances and based on a case-by-case assessment of the personal situation of the individual concerned.

### **Amnesty International calls on the Egyptian authorities to:**

- Make urgent and substantial efforts to halt the ongoing abuses against refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants in the Sinai region of the country;

In particular, the Egyptian authorities should:

- Strengthen human rights compliant law enforcement response throughout Egypt, including in Sinai;
- Train police and immigration personnel to deal with human trafficking issues, including the identification of trafficking situations, and awareness of the needs of victims;
- Investigate reports of kidnapping, trafficking and human rights abuses and, where there is sufficient admissible evidence, arrest and prosecute suspects in prompt and fair trials that meet international standards, without recourse to the death penalty;
- Immediately investigate reports that hostages are held in compounds in the northeast of the Sinai Peninsula, the locations of some of which have been publicly reported. Take steps to free all persons held captive and ensure that they receive immediate medical attention and access to fair and effective asylum proceedings;
- Make substantial efforts to protect and support victims of trafficking and other abuses in Sinai. These must include putting in place and implementing measures to identify and assist victims of trafficking and other abuses in Sinai, including the provision of access to medical and psycho-social support and other rehabilitation services in line with international standards;

- Ensure that undocumented asylum-seekers who have been victims of trafficking, are not detained or charged with illegal entry, and ensure that asylum-seekers are only detained in the most exceptional circumstances and based on a case-by-case assessment of the personal situation of the individual concerned;
- Ensure that all asylum-seekers, including those who have been victims of trafficking, are given access to fair and effective asylum procedures and to the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and are protected from forcible return while their asylum procedure is ongoing;
- Collaborate fully with other international entities, including the International Organisation for Migration and the UN, and other regional governments in efforts and initiatives to address this issue in a human rights compliant manner;
- Provide the International Organisation for Migration, the UNHCR and other relevant organizations with full and unimpeded access to detention facilities used for holding asylum-seekers and refugees in Sinai.

## ERITREA

Systematic and pervasive violations of the human rights of people in Eritrea, and particularly the practice of indefinite conscription of all adults into national service, cause thousands of Eritreans to flee their country every month.

### **Amnesty International calls on the Eritrean government to:**

- Ensure that any cooperation in regional efforts to address trafficking is in line with international law and standards and does not in any way infringe the human rights of people in Eritrea, including, in particular, freedom of movement;
- Investigate allegations of the involvement of senior Eritrean officials in crimes of kidnapping and trafficking, and bring those responsible to justice in prompt and fair trial proceedings which comply with international standards, without recourse to the death penalty.

## ISRAEL

As a destination country of victims of trafficking and abuses in Sinai, Israel must put in place improved systems to identify victims, and provide them with access to fair and effective asylum procedures and adequate support services.

Thousands of asylum-seekers in Israel, including victims of abuses in Sinai, continue to be detained under the "Prevention of Infiltration Law". The law allows anyone who enters Israel without permission to be detained for three or more years, and applies to adults and children. Detention for immigration control purposes should only be imposed in the most exceptional circumstances and based on a case-by-case assessment of the personal situation of the individual concerned.

Additionally, individuals subjected to prolonged captivity, including individuals rendered particularly vulnerable as a result of violence and cruelty, require heightened levels of care and treatment. A detention facility is not an appropriate location in which to provide such care.

**Amnesty International calls on the Israeli government to:**

- Immediately release from immigration detention in Israel all asylum-seekers in whose cases a detailed individualised assessment of the necessity of detention has not taken place. Any decision to detain asylum-seekers should always comply with international standards pertaining to the lawfulness of detention, and should be based on a detailed individualized assessment. International law makes clear that state authorities must demonstrate in each individual case that detention is necessary and proportionate to the aim pursued;
- Ensure that all asylum-seekers are immediately given access to fair and effective asylum proceedings, and are protected from forcible return or deportations to third countries while their asylum procedure is ongoing;
- Establish a comprehensive and transparent system to identify victims of trafficking and other abuses in Sinai, and apply it to those arriving at the border and those already in the country;
- Provide victims of trafficking and other abuses with access to medical, psycho-social and other rehabilitation services which meet international standards.

**REGIONAL COOPERATION**

Substantial efforts are required from all countries in the region to combat human trafficking and to protect asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants from human rights violations and abuses. But country-level efforts cannot happen in isolation. Considerable cooperation and coordination is required between all of the governments along the trafficking route – Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt – to achieve an effective response to trafficking.

**Amnesty International calls on all governments along the trafficking routes to:**

- Develop procedures to increase effective and human rights compliant coordination of law enforcement and immigration services, particularly to rapidly identify and apprehend traffickers, and to identify, assist and protect victims of trafficking;
- Ensure that cooperation between states complies with international law and standards, and does not infringe in any way upon the rights and safety of asylum-seekers and refugees, with particular regard to the rights of freedom of movement and the right to claim asylum.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that there are approximately 89,000 refugees in East Sudan, of which 99.4% are Eritrean. Approximately 30,000 of those currently live in Shagarab camps. This includes new arrivals but also Eritreans who fled to Sudan during the Eritrean war of Independence against Ethiopia (between the 1960s and early 1990s). The political repression and prospect of decades of conscription in national service continue to cause around 3,000 people to flee Eritrea every month. According to UNHCR, a large proportion of them leave Eritrea via Sudan.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 8 and footnote 5

<sup>3</sup> See p. 8 and footnote 6

<sup>4</sup> UNHCR, 'Refugees and the Rashaida: human smuggling and trafficking from Eritrea to Sudan and Egypt', March 2013, <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/human%20smuggling%20and%20trafficking%20from%20Eritrea%20to%20Sudan%20and%20Egypt.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Physicians for Human Rights-Israel and the Hotline for Migrant Workers, '[Tortured in Sinai, Jailed in Israel: Detention of Torture and Slavery Survivors under the Anti Infiltration Law](http://www.scribd.com/doc/112198648/Tortured-in-Sinai-Jailed-in-Israel:Detention-of-Torture-and-Slavery-Survivors-under-the-Anti-Infiltration-Law)', (<http://www.scribd.com/doc/112198648/Tortured-in-Sinai-Jailed-in-Srael-Eng>) or, There have also been reports in a smaller number of cases of the complicity or involvement in kidnappings of Sudanese security forces stationed on the border between Ethiopia and Sudan.

<sup>6</sup> UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, 'Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2002 (2011)', (July 2012). [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2012/545](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2012/545)

<sup>7</sup> Rashaida are often mentioned in testimonies of residents of Shagarab camps, families of victims who have been kidnapped and those who have escaped from captivity. They are a tribe of traditionally nomadic camel pastoralists who are found in Eritrea and eastern Sudan among other locations. In Sudan, many are based close to the border with Eritrea in an area called Mastora.

<sup>8</sup> Trafficking in persons is "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs." Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Article 3(a)).

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, "Stand in the Sinai", a series of documentaries available at: <http://thecnnfreedomproject.blogs.cnn.com/2012/09/26/stand-in-the-sinai-now-online/>.

<sup>10</sup> Smuggling is “the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a state party of which the person is not a national”, Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (2000).

<sup>11</sup> Many of the victims come from poor families who face significant difficulties in raising sufficient money to pay the ransom. The families of many victims are refugees themselves in countries where they have limited or no economic opportunities; many of the families still reside in Eritrea, where a large proportion of the population are conscripted indefinitely into national service, with a monthly wage that is inadequate to meet a family’s basic needs. The economy in Eritrea is in a dire state. Therefore, many families of victims have to go to extreme lengths to raise the money, selling property and belongings, raising money from their communities and other activities.

<sup>12</sup> Sudan is a State-party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, and the Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa.

<sup>13</sup> Egypt is a state party to several international Conventions directly relevant to human trafficking and to the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees, including the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ratified in 2004) and the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (ratified in 1981). The Egyptian authorities are further subject to national laws on trafficking, including Law 64 of 2010 on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (Anti-Trafficking Law), adopted by the People’s Assembly on 2 May 2010 and published in the Official Gazette on 9 May 2010; and Implementing Regulations of the Anti-Trafficking Law, Prime Minister Decree 3028 of 2010, 6 December 2010.

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