

Africans Storm Spain's Ceuta Border Fence for Asylum



Madrid, December 12 (RHC)-- Refugees are once again attempting to break through a fortified fence to reach Spain from Morocco. Over the past decade, 400 African refugees have crossed a barbed-wire fence into Spain's overseas territory of Ceuta neighboring Morocco. A local government spokesman, who wished to remain anonymous, said the unprecedented number of refugees scaled two entry points in the six-meter-high wall that encircles Ceuta.

El Faro de Ceuta newspaper posted footage on-line showing scores of refugees celebrating as they crossed into the walled city. Some 103 people with minor injuries have been treated, the Red Cross said, adding that 25 others have been transferred to the hospital.

"Most of the people have been apprehended and we are looking for the rest so that they can immediately be processed," said Spain's Interior Minister Juan Ignacio Zoido. He added that 20 percent of those who had climbed the border had not been located by authorities yet.

Ceuta and Melilla, another Spanish territory neighboring northern Morocco, form the only land borders of the European Union with Africa. The two cities have a combined population of just over 170,000.

Refugees struggle to reach Spain from Morocco by climbing the border fence. They also attempt to cross the Mediterranean in flimsy boats, despite tighter controls in recent years by the two states, which have

led to a decline in the number of those trying this route.

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