Border fences and internal border controls in Europe

UNHCR March 2017

In response to concerns regarding in- ing conflict or human rights violations. As creased numbers of refugees and mi- a result of such restrictions, people seekgrants arriving at their borders, several European States, including European Union (EU) Member States, have constructed fences along their borders and increased border controls, including in- with national and regional authorities for ternal border controls within the Schengen area*. While States have the right to determine who enters their territory, they also have obligations under international, regional and national law to ensure that persons have the opportunity to seek asylum and are not turned away without an individual assessment of their claim by be in need of international protection as designated authorities. In many places, well as those with specific needs (such as fences and barriers may result in denying access to protection to people flee-

ing international protection increasingly rely on smugglers or use more dangerous routes thus putting their safety even more at risk. UNHCR has long advocated protection-sensitive border policies and practices, including support to protection-sensitive legislation and procedures as well as training efforts, to help authorities identify, provide information to, and refer to adequate protection procedures those apprehended at borders who may unaccompanied or separated children).

*For some, border fences and controls serve other purposes as well as those related to immigration control.













Ceuta, Spain SCHENGEN AREA PHOTO CREDIT: 1.@UNHCR/SHUBHASH WOSTEY Melilla, Spain 2. ©UNHCR 3. ©UNHCR/ACHILLES ZAVALLIS **BORDER FENCE** 4.@UNHCR/MARK HENLEY 5.@UNHCR/JOEL VAN TEMPORARY BORDER CONTROL HOUDT 6.©JOSE PALAZÓN OSMA This map does not depict efforts by the EU and non-EU Member States to prevent irregular departures including from neighbouring states or the re through the deployment of additional personnel to EU external borders (including national, bilateral or Frontex deployments as well as the increased lateral army resources including NATO and EUNAVFOR Med deployments). The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this maj

