

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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> Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment please email Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca.

17 April 2013

MAR104354.FE

Morocco: Honour crimes, including frequency; government protection for victims (2011-March 2013)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

The Research Directorate found little information among the sources consulted concerning honour crimes in Morocco.

1. Overview

Two sources report that there are honour crimes in Morocco (PhD candidate 4 Apr. 2013; Researcher 27 Mar. 2013). However, in correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, a PhD candidate in Political Science at McGill University who has conducted extensive research in Morocco (PhD candidate, 18 Feb. 2013) noted that honour crimes are [translation] "fairly rare" and "not socially accepted" (ibid., 4 Apr. 2013). In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, a researcher in Middle Eastern cultures and advisor to the Dutch police explained that, during a stay in Morocco in 2009, the Rabat police had told him that murders committed in the name of family honour are unknown in Morocco (Researcher 27 Mar. 2013). According to the researcher, honour crimes in Morocco are considered to be [translation] "offences" (ibid.). The same researcher, who participated in a 2010 conference organized by the French senate on forced marriages and honour crimes, pointed out that, in Morocco,

[Translation]

a woman who has extra-marital sexual relationships must be disowned by her family and by the community. A woman must be disowned so that the family can restore its honour and be accepted once again by the community. ... a Moroccan girl can return to her family after two years of having been disowned. (France 16 Apr. 2010)

Corroborating information was not found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

2. Government Protection for Victims

The researcher reports that honour-related acts of violence are not subject to a special law in Morocco (27 March 2013). However, the PhD candidate stated that

[translation]

the law confers mitigating circumstances to people who commit honour crimes, but the law is poorly written and open to various interpretations. Some judges take the issue of honour into account as a mitigating circumstance, and others do not. This remains at the discretion of Moroccan judges, whose decisions vary on a case-by-case basis.

The law deals with honour crimes in the same way that it deals with all other crimes in the country, and the law enforcement system does not offer any particular clemency to people who commit honour crimes. They will be arrested as would be any other criminal in the country. (PhD candidate 4 Apr. 2013)

According to the PhD candidate,

[translation]

the state does absolutely nothing to protect women who are victims or potential victims of an honour crime. Some women's rights groups provide shelter to disadvantaged women (such as single mothers and victims of domestic violence), but there is no specific protection program for women who are victims or potential victims of honour crimes. (ibid.)

Corroborating information was not found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

France. 16 April 2010. Senate. Michèle André. *Mariages forcés, crimes dits d'honneur (actes du colloque du 8 mars 2010)*. <<http://www.senat.fr/rap/r09-408/r09-40812.html>> [Accessed 20 Mar. 2013]

PhD candidate, McGill University, Montreal. 4 April 2013. Correspondence sent to the Research Directorate.

_____. 18 February 2013. Correspondence sent to the Research Directorate.

Researcher and advisor to the Dutch police. 27 March 2013. Correspondence sent to the Research Directorate.

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Attempts to reach representatives and academics at the following organizations were unsuccessful: Isis Centre for Women and Development, Morocco; Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University.

Researchers and professors at the University of Toronto were unable to provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet sites, including: Agence France-Presse; L'aménagement linguistique dans le monde; Amnesty Belgique Francophone; Amnesty International; Center for Women's Global Leadership; Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network; *L'Express*; Factiva; Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme; Femmes sous lois musulmanes; France 24; Freedom House; Honour Based Violence Awareness Network; Human Rights Watch; ISIS Centre for Women and Development; *Le Maroc au féminin*; *Maroc Hebdo International*; *Le Matin du Maroc*; Midden Oosten Perspectief; Mondes des femmes; *La Presse*; Radio-Canada; Réseau euro-méditerranéen des droits de l'homme; United Nations – Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Refworld; United States – Department of State; University of Toronto; Women for Human Rights; Yabiladi.

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