

## ≡ EL PAÍS

### **Wildfire sees migrants evacuated from Ceuta holding center**

Around 900 people were being held at facility equipped to house just 500, say sources

ROCÍO ABAD

5 October 2015

A temporary holding center for undocumented migrants in the Spanish north African exclave of Ceuta was evacuated on Monday as a wildfire swept across a nearby mountain area.

About 900 people were being held at the center, which is only equipped to hold about 500, according to sources consulted by EL PAÍS.

Around 100 new migrants were taken to the temporary holding center (CETI) this weekend after they tried to enter Spanish territory from Morocco by crossing a six-meter breakwater wall in the northern bay.

The central government's delegate in Ceuta explained that it was ordering the "voluntary" and "preventive" evacuation of the CETI to prevent people from inhaling the smoke produced by the fire raging on Monte de la Tortuga, which is located in the northern bay area.

The majority of those decided to leave the installations voluntarily while about 30 remained. Many of those who left headed toward a nearby beach.

Ceuta government officials have provided buses to help transport migrants to the Santa Amelia stadium where the Red Cross has set up a citizen attention center. Local authorities have also ordered the evacuation of residents from five homes located near the fire.

The magnitude of the blaze has forced the local government to declare a level-two alert and ask for the help of the Agriculture Ministry to extinguish the flames, which are rapidly gaining strength because of strong winds.

---

English version by Martin Delfín.