

**MED REPORT**  
**JULY 2025**



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# AWDA HATHALEEN WAS KILLED

BUT THE ISRAELI ARMY PROTECTS  
THE MURDEROUS SETTLER



Awda Hathaleen - father of three kids, tireless activist and a point of reference for the community of the village of Umm al-Kheir - was killed by Israeli settler Yinon Levy during a violent attack on the village by Israeli settlers. Yinon Levy was filmed opening fire on the Palestinian population.

**Palestinian activist killed by Israeli settler. “Italy and the EU should impose sanctions on those who violate human rights”**

On the evening of July 28, Awda Hathaleen, 31, Palestinian activist and resident of the village of Umm al Khair (Masafer Yatta, southern West Bank), was shot dead by Yinon Levy, an Israeli settler known for his involvement in attacks against Palestinian civilians and also known to the activists of Mediterranean Saving Humans who have been present in the region since the beginning of the year as international observers with the “Mediterranea with Palestine” project.

Levy has been subject to US sanctions before they were lifted by the Trump administration, and remains under sanctions from the United Kingdom, France, Canada and several other countries for acts of violence and intimidation against Palestinian civilians. However, the Trump administration decided to lift US sanctions against him despite well-documented evidence of his actions.



The murder occurred during a violent attack on the village of Umm al Khair by Israeli settlers. Yinon Levy was film opening fire on the Palestinian population, causing the death of Hathaleen. After the murder, the army, present at the scene, protected the settler. According to several witnesses, the soldiers cursed at those present, saying they were sorry they weren't the ones who shot Hathaleen.

The tension had begun a few hours earlier, when the settlers had begun working on the Palestinian fields, tampering with the water and electricity systems of the village of Umm Al Khair, even using some bulldozers.

Following the incident, Israeli military forces invaded the village, arresting at least seven Palestinians and two foreign citizens, one was American and the other one Italian. No Israeli settler has been arrested so far.

In this, as in many other cases of similar violence in the occupied Palestinian Territories, the guilty are known by name, but they remain completely unpunished thanks to the complicity of the Israeli government, which legitimizes and fuels the process of ethnic cleansing that has been ongoing for decades in Masafer Yatta.

«Awda's murder at the hands of an Israeli settler is the direct result of the climate of total impunity in which the occupation forces operate in Palestine», explains Elisa Caneve, coordinator of Mediterranean Saving Humans' projects in Palestine. «Awda's village, Umm al Khair, like many other villages where we are present in Masafer Yatta, is experiencing a daily and systemic process of ethnic cleansing that is not perpetrated only through acts of violent settlers, but also through evictions, demolitions, and arbitrary arrests. Since our first half-yearly report on violence against civilian population in Masafer Yatta, we have recorded 836 human rights violations in merely 129 days. The village of Umm al Khair, as our activists present in the region since the beginning of the year have been able to certify, is among the villages most affected by violence from settlers and the Israeli army.».

«Awda was the point of reference for his community, he was a tireless activist and coordinated the presence of us international activists who support the Palestinian community in the practice of Sumud, nonviolent resistance, carried out by remaining on their land, cultivating it and loving it despite the daily difficulties and threats. Awda was father of 3, and all of Masafer Yatta will remember his commitment and his and our dream: the end of the occupation», the coordinator continues.

«Yesterday the occupation forces called to the scene» Caneve continues «arrested two international activists present on the scene and seven inhabitants of the village. The intention was to prevent us from monitoring and witnessing what was happening and, in any case, no action was taken against any of the violent settlers who attacked the village», Caneve concludes. «We ask for the Italian government and the European Union to impose sanctions on the State of Israel for these ongoing crimes that remain unpunished. Our report reveals specific responsibilities for the committed crimes, which we are making available to international justice and the Italian authorities».

**BORDER STORIES**

# **THE SPANISH HOPE**

**SPAIN'S MIGRATION POLICIES,  
DESPITE THE EU**

A new group of migrant people attempted to reach the Spanish exclave of Ceuta, and thus Spain, by swimming. The country is shaken by strong waves of hatred against migrant people, while the government is attempting to open up by changing its stance compared to other European Union member states.

Adult migrant people are reserved a different route and, after swimming to Ceuta, are more easily returned to Morocco under agreements signed between the governments of the two countries.

Although it is not one of the most frequented routes for migrant people, there are occasional attempts to access the Spanish exclaves, despite the great risks and uncertain conditions. The peak arrival time in Ceuta was in May 2021, when over 8.000 people entered the country by swimming or crossing the fence. In June 2022, more than 20 people died in a stampede of over 2.000 people trying to cross the barrier and enter Melilla. Although most migrant people reached Spain by sea via the Canary Islands, 7% of the approximately 20.000 people who entered the country this year arrived in Ceuta.

Spain is experiencing a period of growing racial hatred towards migrant people in the country. Earlier this month, several people, including activists from local neo-fascist groups and people who had traveled for the occasion from the capital, Alicante and Almería, clashed with North African migrant people in Torre Pacheco, a town of 40,000 inhabitants in Murcia. Around 300 people have been identified by Spanish police. The violence escalated after a man who was beaten in the streets for no apparent reason by a young man while another filmed the incident. From here, messages of racial hatred against migrants, and in particular North Africans, spread on social media, urging the local population to take action and teach the perpetrators a lesson.

This episode has sparked more or less violent demonstrations of hatred, such as attacks on mosques and the hunt for foreign women, leading to groups of white supremacists armed with clubs or machetes who have roamed the town clashing with groups of North African migrant people.

The Guardia Civil intervened in riot gear in an attempt to quell the unrest. Hateful messages calling for new pogroms are spreading in far-right chat rooms and social media channels, such as "Deport Them Now".

### **Spain tries to respond to growing hatred towards migrant people with new inclusive and welcoming policies**

At the end of July, a group of 54 minors and about 30 adults swam, taking advantage of thick fog, from Morocco to the Spanish exclave of Ceuta in North Africa, which, with Melilla, represents a Spanish territory Africa. Spanish authorities intercepted some of the people attempting to swim across, in rough seas and very limited visibility, and took them to the exclave in a rubber boat; the Spanish Guardia Civil worked throughout the night to prevent casualties.

According to Spanish media, most of those involved are young Moroccan nationals. Unaccompanied foreign minors have the right to remain in Spain at least until they come of age, ensuring they can apply for asylum in Spain.

Sure enough, under normal circumstances, the minors would be welcomed in the exclaves to apply for international protection; however, the reception facilities are currently full and the Ceuta government has therefore asked the Spanish central government to transfer the minors to Spain.

The neo-Nazi party 'Democracia Nacional' has urged its members to "seek conflict and anticipate it".

Socialist and left-wing groups have especially blamed the hatred spread by Vox, in a national political climate that sees right-wing groups escalating their anti-immigration campaigns. A recent survey by the Center for Sociological Research shows an increase in support for these policies; Vox, for example, went from 13 to 19%. According to the Spanish Observatory against Racism and Xenophobia, between July 6 and 12, appeared on social media at least 138.000 messages against migrant people; only 22% of these were removed.

Spain, however, remains a country that is courageously attempting to go in the opposite direction to the European Union countries, trying to open up to migrant people and implement more inclusive and welcoming policies towards them. In June, Sanchez's government announced its intention to regularize approximately 500.000 undocumented migrant people in the country who arrived before December 31 and had no criminal record.

The measure is the result of a civil society initiative that has collected over 800.000 signatures; it has been placed on Parliament's agenda and is expected to be adopted by September.

Faced with an increasingly aging population and labor shortages in strategic labor sectors such as tourism, construction, and personal services, the Spanish government is aiming for greater stabilization through the integration of workers already present in the country. Even the moderate right has partially supported the initiative, provided it remains limited to sectors of the labor market experiencing a labor shortage. The far right, however, has rejected any proposal for regularization.

Faced with increasingly harsher European Union policies, Spain is seeking to take a step towards migrant people, proposing policies that, if successful, could help shift the paradigm.

# LET'S TAKE STOCK

## MONTHLY REPORT ON MIGRATIONS

What happened on the migratory routes of Europe, of the Mediterranean, of the world?

What measures have governments taken?

Who provided assistance?

Who, instead, sanctioned, detained or rejected?

Let's take stock.

## **Libya, 8th July**

The Libyan government refused to grant permission to enter Libya to the European Commissioner for Migration Magnus Brunner, who was leading a delegation of officials from Greece, Italy and Malta that had arrived in Tripoli to agree on increased controls along the Libyan coast.

## **Libya, 14th July**

The Libyan government has freed more than 100 people on the move who were held in the Ajdabiya concentration camp, accusing the camp's managers of torture and human trafficking. This is a settling of scores between militias colluding with the Libyan authorities.

## **Mauritania, 27th July**

75 people from West Africa aboard a boat that had been drifting for two days were rescued by Mauritanian authorities.

## **Libya, 29th July**

Over 1500 irregular foreign workers have been captured in Eastern Tripoli and imprisoned by the Libyan authorities.

## **European Union, 1st July**

The European Commissioner for Migration Brunner urged Libyan authorities to take action to prevent migration from Libya to Europe given the increase in arrivals in Greece of people from the North African country.

## **Poland, 1st July**

Poland has imposed temporary border controls with Germany and Lithuania to block illegal immigration. Prior to this, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk had accused Germany of failing to fulfil its obligations to welcome asylum seekers.

## **Germany, 8th July**

The Administrative Court of Berlin has ruled that the German government is legally bound by its commitment to grant asylum to an Afghan family facing persecution by the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

## **France – United Kingdom, 8th July**

French President Emmanuel Macron travelled to London to meet with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer to discuss how to eliminate irregular migration across the English Channel.

## **Greece, 10th July**

The Greek government has announced the suspension of asylum applications for people arriving by sea from North Africa for three months due to an emergency situation.

## **Bulgaria, 14th July**

11 people were captured by police near Prisadets, Bulgaria, and illegally pushed back to Türkiye.

## **Germany, 16th July**

Khaled Mohamed Ali el Hishri, known as al Buti, one of the highest officials of the Libyan prison of Mitiga accused of crimes against humanity, has been arrested in Germany pursuant to a warrant issued by the International Criminal Court.

## **Greece, 17th July**

The Greek government has announced a law proposal that would imprison, for up to three years, undocumented people who refuse to leave Greece.

## **Germany, 18th July**

81 Afghan citizens, whose asylum applications had been rejected and who had criminal records, were deported on a flight from Leipzig to Afghanistan.

### **Poland, 22nd July**

A Polish soldier fired a rubber bullet at a migrant of Sudanese nationality who was attempting to cross the border with Belarus. The man was lightly injured, while 5 other people on the move were arrested on the spot.

### **Germany, 22nd July**

43 Iraqi citizens were deported to Baghdad on a flight that departed from Leipzig. They all had expulsion orders against them.

### **France, 28th July**

One person died of cardiac arrest while trying to reach the United Kingdom by crossing the English Channel. On the same day, a woman was killed by gunfire in the informal camp of Loon Plage, near the French city of Dunkirk, in a clash between various migrant communities living there in precarious conditions.

### **Greece, 30th June**

Several officials of the so-called Libyan coast guard were trained in Greece with the objective of strengthening cooperation between the two states to prevent landings on European coasts.

### **Libya, 1st July**

Ocean Viking (SOS Méditerranée) located an empty, engine-less inflatable raft in the Libyan SAR zone. Aboard there were 50 people, who were deported by the so-called Libyan coast guard.

### **Civil Fleet, 2nd July**

Thanks to a report from Seabird (Sea Watch), Ocean Viking rescued 37 people, including 3 unaccompanied minors, aboard an inflatable raft in the Libyan SAR zone and disembarked them in the port of Ancona, assigned by the Italian authorities.

### **Civil Fleet, 2nd July**

Garganey IV (TOM Project) rescued 60 people aboard a metal vessel in the Maltese SAR zone. The civilian sailing vessel also assisted 52 other shipwreck victims, 20 of whom were in the water when the operation began, just a few miles away. The people aboard the second vessel were subsequently rescued by the Italian Coast Guard. All were disembarked in Lampedusa.

### **Civil Fleet, 4th July**

Although the vessel in distress had been located by Frontex and a Libyan patrol boat had gone to the spot, Aurora (Sea Watch) rescued 81 people and disembarked them safely in Lampedusa.

### **Civil Fleet, 7th July**

Aurora (Sea Watch) rescued 52 persons and disembarked them in Pozzallo, a port assigned by the Italian authorities even though it meant an extra day of navigation on a small vessel for the shipwrecked persons.

### **Lesbos, 8th July**

Despite the threatening presence of a Frontex patrol boat nearby, the Greek Coast Guard rescued around 32 people off the coast of Lesbos and disembarked them on the island.

### **Sicily, 8-9th July**

Two boats from Libya were rescued by Italian authorities off the southeast coast of Sicily. On board there were approximately 37 and 40 people, respectively.

### **Crete, 9th July**

Five boats in distress were rescued by the Greek Coast Guard off the coast of Crete and the people were disembarked on the island.

### **Civil Fleet, 11th July**

Humanity 1 (SOS Humanity) rescued 26 people aboard a vessel in distress and disembarked them in Brindisi, a port assigned by the Italian authorities, however four days of sailing from the place of rescue.

### **Civil Fleet, 15th July**

Approximately 40 people aboard a drifting boat in the Libyan SAR zone were intercepted by the so-called Libyan coast guard and deported to Libya.

### **Benalmádena, 16th July**

A yacht rescued a person in danger off the Andalusian coast while they were trying to reach Spain by swimming from Morocco.

### **Civil Fleet, 16th July**

Aurora assisted a boat in distress until the arrival of the Italian Coast Guard and rescued another one, previously assisted by the civilian sailing boat Dakini. All 150 people were safely disembarked in Lampedusa.

### **Civil Fleet, 18th July**

Despite Malta's refusal to coordinate operations, Humanity 1 rescued 40 people aboard a rubber boat in the Maltese SAR zone thanks to a report from Alarm Phone and disembarked them in Bari, a port assigned by Italian authorities despite being 800km from the rescue location.

### **Lampedusa, 21st July**

Approximately 95 people in danger were rescued by Italian authorities south of Lampedusa and disembarked on the island.

### **Lampedusa, 22-24th July**

In less than 48 hours, 1028 people disembarked in Lampedusa. Most were fleeing from Libya.

### **Civil Fleet, 23rd July**

Life Support (Emergency) rescued 71 people, including a pregnant woman and 15 unaccompanied minors, in two separate operations, and disembarked them in the distant port of Ancona, assigned by Italian authorities.

### **Civil Fleet, 24th July**

Humanity 1 rescued 67 people and disembarked them in the port of Brindisi, assigned by Italian authorities despite the distance of over 900 km from the operation site.

### **Crete, 24th July**

A boat in distress with 24 people aboard was rescued off Crete by the merchant vessel Maersk Izmir, which disembarked the survivors on the island.

### **Civil Fleet, 24th July**

Sea-Eye 5 rescued 17 people aboard a boat in distress. Two of them were evacuated respectively by a Maltese helicopter and an Italian Coast Guard patrol boat due to their serious medical conditions. The other people disembarked in Vibo Valentia, a port assigned by Italian authorities nearly 30 hours of navigation away.

### **Ceuta, 28th July**

54 unaccompanied minors attempted to reach the Spanish enclave of Ceuta by swimming. The Spanish Coast Guard intercepted some of them and transferred them to Spanish territory.

### **Civil Fleet, 28th July**

Trotamar III (Compass Collective) assisted 70 people aboard a boat in distress until the arrival of the Italian Coast Guard, which rescued them and safely disembarked them in Lampedusa.



### **Civil Fleet, 30-31st July**

2 people died during rescue operations carried out by the merchant vessel Port Fukuoka. Thanks to a report from Seabird and assistance from Trotamar III, Nadir (ResQShip) and Ocean Viking, the other survivors were rescued by the merchant vessel and disembarked in Reggio Calabria, except for two pregnant women who required urgent medical evacuation to Lampedusa.

### **Libya, 31st July**

Approximately 80 people aboard a rubber boat drifting in the Libyan SAR zone were intercepted and deported to Libya by the so-called Libyan coast guard.

### **Palermo, 22nd July**

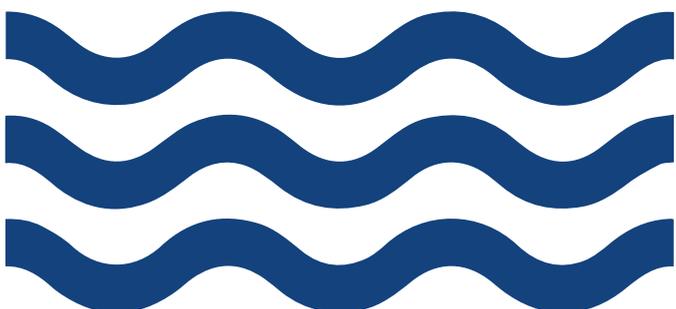
The Prosecutor's Office of Palermo has appealed the acquittal sentence against former Interior Minister Matteo Salvini, who was accused of kidnapping and refusal to perform official duties for not allowing the disembarkation of 149 people rescued by the civilian ship Open Arms in August 2019. Now the final decision will be up to the Court of Cassation.

### **Crotone, 22nd July**

The Prosecutor's Office of Crotone has committed for trial 4 officials of the Financial Guard and two of the Coast Guard for culpable shipwreck and multiple culpable homicide following the events that caused 94 deaths in the Cutro shipwreck.

### **Lampedusa, 22nd July**

The civilian vessel Aurora was subjected to a 20-day administrative detention in Lampedusa for violating the so-called Piantedosi Decree. According to the reconstruction by Italian authorities, Aurora disembarked the people in Lampedusa instead of the initially assigned port of Pozzallo. However, Sea Watch had obtained a change of disembarkation port because weather conditions did not allow Aurora to reach Pozzallo.





**REPORT**

**BORDERLINE EUROPE**

**NEWS FROM THE CENTRAL  
MEDITERRANEAN**

## Arrivals

According to [borderline-europe's](#) counts, 6,490 people reached Italy by sea in July 2025. Of these, 5,531 people (85%) arrived in Sicily, mainly in Lampedusa. This month we counted four crossings to Italy via the Ionian route. In two cases, we know with certainty that the boats departed from Turkey with a total of 166 people. Overall, [borderline-europe](#) can demonstrate that boats departed from Libya for approximately 72% of arrivals. The percentage of departures from Libya is almost certainly higher. In almost 20% of cases we were unable to demonstrate the departure location. The percentage of departures from Tunisia this month is approximately 7.4%, slightly up from the previous month (7%). According to our counts, Italian authorities brought approximately 52.2% of arrived people to shore (3,385 people), while in one case the actual rescue was carried out by the Italian NGO ARCI & Sailing for Blue LAB. A total of 807 people (approximately 12.4%) were rescued by civilian rescue ships. According to [borderline-europe](#) data, Frontex was involved in rescuing 420 people in June (6.5%). This month, 364 people (5.6%) reached Italian coastal waters (12 nautical miles from shore) autonomously without being intercepted or rescued. In some cases (2.3%) they were brought to safe harbor by Frontex or the Italian Coast Guard after reaching territorial waters. At the end of June, 97 people were rescued by a merchant vessel, accounting for 1.5% of rescues. For 19.5% of arrivals, no rescue information was available. According to official data from the Italian Ministry of Interior, 6,487 people arrived in Italy in July. We were able to document the same number of arrivals this month.

## Pushbacks

This month we recorded 1,460 interceptions (pullbacks or rejections at sea) in the central Mediterranean, where boats with refugees were pushed back or pulled back to the North African coast. 1,415 people were dragged back to Libya and 45 people to Tunisia. These figures are without guarantee. The actual number is likely much higher.

One interception by the so-called Libyan Coast Guard received particular media attention in June: During their attempt to break the blockade of Gaza and deliver aid, the crew of the ship *Madleen* of the Freedom Flotilla Coalition witnessed a pullback to Libya. The refugees from Sudan who were in distress were within the Egyptian maritime and rescue zone when - in addition to the *Madleen* - a ship of the Libyan militia Tariq Ben Zeyad approached, which is known for serious human rights violations and the forced return of asylum seekers. While four people jumped into the water and could be taken aboard by the *Madleen*, it can be assumed that the other people were dragged back to Libya, where they face imprisonment and torture.

## Dead and missing

The number of deaths and missing in the Central Mediterranean continues to increase each passing month. According to [borderline-europe](#) data, in July 44 people lost their lives fleeing across the Central Mediterranean and 55 people are considered missing. The fate of another 38 people is uncertain. Within missing persons, the term “missing” usually refers to people whose fate is unknown, but who have recently disappeared and for whom there is still realistic hope of being alive. In [borderline-europe](#)’s daily work, we mainly use the term for people whose bodies cannot be found. The status of “uncertain fate,” on the other hand, usually refers to long-term absences for which it is absolutely unclear whether the people involved survived. This can be applied, for example, to boats that we know have set sail, but about which no further information can be obtained.

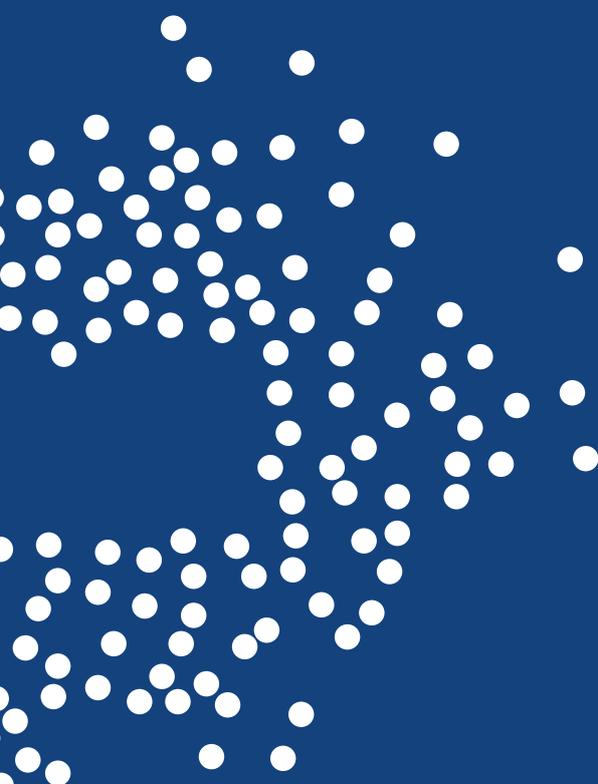
## Routes to Europe

### EU Border Policy and the New Cooperation Zone in Eastern Libya

On July 8, an official EU delegation led by Migration Commissioner Brunner sought to involve stakeholders from the country’s east in talks on “migration control.” The context is the growing number of crossings to Italy, particularly via the route from eastern Libya. The “Team Europe” mission’s goal was to cooperate more closely with eastern Libyan general Khalifa Haftar to stem the number of departures from the region. Since the officially recognized government is based in Tripoli, the meeting intended to remain neutral and did not imply any political recognition of eastern Libyan authorities. Some European voices interpreted the mission as an attempt to counter Russia’s growing influence in Haftar’s sphere of influence. So far there is no concrete evidence of this, but only theories warning of a possible “hybrid war” scenario in which migration could be used as geopolitical leverage against the EU.

However, the diplomatic attempt failed: upon arrival in Benghazi, the delegation was turned away and told to leave the country immediately. Apparently, the delegation refused to publicize the meeting with representatives of Haftar’s government. This could have amounted to political recognition, which the EU expressly wanted to avoid.

Parallel to the EU visit’s failure in Benghazi, the situation of migrants in Libya continues to deteriorate. In mid-July, eastern Libyan authorities reported deporting 700 Sudanese migrants. The deportations were carried out by bus to the border region with Sudan, an area that continues to be massively affected by violence, hunger and displacement. Eastern Libyan authorities presented the action as an “attack on smuggling networks,” but it is part of a repressive migration regime that targets people seeking protection under the pretext of security. Their deportation to life-threatening areas not only violates international standards, but also shows how far the EU is willing to go to legitimize such measures by collaborating with those responsible.



This was followed, a few days later, by a large raid in Tripoli's suburb of al-Sabaa: Libyan security forces arrested over 1,500 people, mostly undocumented migrant workers, and brought them to overcrowded detention centers.

It is with deep sadness that we report two deaths that exemplify the systematic failure of the international protection system and the dramatic situation facing migrants in Libya. Quftu Abu Wahelow, a 19-year-old Ethiopian refugee nine months pregnant, was abandoned by the institutions that should have protected her. The fate of Hassan, a young Sudanese who after suffering abuse wandered disoriented through Tripoli and was eventually beaten to death, also shows the brutal reality. Libya is not a safe place, yet European states continue to rely on cooperation with its institutions.

## Effects of Migration Policy in Tunisia

Since spring this year - when violence against black people on the move intensified in Tunisia - reports of deportations to the desert have increased. From interception at sea to abandonment in the desert to deportation, the Tunisian government, with support from European actors, uses deterrent practices that put migrants at risk of death. On July 21, Tunisian authorities intercepted six people at sea - including three women and a child - and abandoned them in the desert in the border region with Algeria.

According to Refugees in Tunisia, these crimes are committed without the knowledge of UNHCR and the Tunisian Red Cross. Consequently, the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights (FTDES) found in a study published in July that about 70% of undocumented migrants from sub-Saharan Africa in Tunisia do not trust international organizations. Respondents accuse the organizations of being complicit in Europe's isolation policy and of not providing sufficient humanitarian aid: 85% of undocumented migrants in Tunisia - many of them women and children - have received no support from international organizations. But the abuses go beyond lack of humanitarian aid: in Tunisia, one in five migrants is exploited at work, 40% have suffered physical violence and 30% are traumatized. FTDES emphasizes the urgent need to completely reform migration policy in Tunisia and adopt measures to restore trust in international organizations.

# Civil resistance

## Frontex Illegally Shared Data with EU Police Authority for Years

According to research published in July by Solomon and other media, Frontex illegally shared personal information on migrants and activists with Europol from 2016 to 2023, which was then transmitted to member state police authorities. The controversial “EU Border and Coast Guard Agency” (Frontex) indiscriminately transmitted all data collected on over 13,000 people until 2023. The information was collected during interviews with new arrivals at EU external borders - which, according to the European Data Protection Supervisor, were not always voluntary - including the Lampedusa hotspot.

Among those affected by the data misuse are people whose activities, according to Frontex, “facilitate illegal migration” - an assessment based on flimsy criteria. Every person named in these interviews is considered “suspect” including activists like Helena Maleno, who was criminalized for her sea rescue work: “My whole life was in this police file: my relatives, my phone calls to my mother, even false information about my sex life. They wanted to paint me as promiscuous and lesbian and appealed to morality to make me appear suspicious.”

## Landmark Court Rulings

On July 8, 2025, the Italian Constitutional Court responded to a constitutional challenge against the Piantedosi Decree: The challenge was

rejected and humanitarian ships remained at risk of being blocked by Italian authorities. At the same time, however, the Court referenced internationally applicable maritime law and the duty to save human lives contained therein. All orders must be respected. This means that civilian rescuers at sea not only have the right, but also the duty, to ignore illegal orders from Italian authorities without being penalized. This decision paves the way for future legal action by civilian sea rescue organizations, as public administration and national courts must invoke this principle.

Also new in the Cutro trial: Six officers from the Italian coast guard and customs police have been officially charged with manslaughter for the dramatic Cutro shipwreck of February 26, 2023, and will have to defend themselves in court starting January 2026. Despite early warnings about the boat in distress, the six defendants allegedly underestimated the emergency situation and responded inadequately, causing the deaths of at least 94 people and an undetermined number of missing. Maritime rescue organizations welcome the indictment as an important step toward justice for Cutro victims.

## **Dramatic Effects of Systematic Obstruction of Civilian Sea Rescue**

In an open letter, 32 organizations call for an end to the Italian government's systematic obstruction of civilian sea rescue. The problem was triggered by the arbitrary detention of NADIR and Sea-Eye 5 in June 2025, justified by the Piantedosi and Flussi decrees. NADIR was detained again at the beginning of July. Shortly after, Sea-Watch's Aurora ship and the smallest vessel in the civilian sea rescue fleet, Dakini, were also detained for 20 days each. The open letter emphasizes the fatal consequences of these detentions: since February 2023, there have been 29 detentions of civilian sea rescue ships, forcing crews to spend a total of 700 days in ports while constantly hearing reports of boats in distress, but unable to go out to save them. 822 days were lost because ships were assigned to distant ports. They sailed a total of 330,000 additional kilometers, equivalent to traveling around Earth's orbit eight times. A recent example is Ocean Viking's rescue in mid-July: after saving 16 people, the crew was assigned the port of Ravenna, over 1,600 kilometers away, resulting in a crossing of over four days.

At the end of July, two children under one year old drowned because authorities did not initiate rescue despite Alarmphone's report and Seabird 2's sighting of the boat in distress. The "Aurora" ship was only four and a half hours away and could have rescued the people in distress in time if it had not been blocked by authorities in Lampedusa port.

A few days later, a similar case occurred where "Aurora" could have reached people in distress at sea within hours. Fortunately, Resqship NGO's "NADIR" was able to save the people, but even in this case days of suffering could have been avoided. At least one person drowned in this tragic incident, three others are missing and many survivors - including small children - were in extremely critical health condition.

While more than 800 people have already drowned in the Mediterranean since the beginning of 2025, Italian authorities continue to restrict civilian sea rescue and actively choose to let people in distress at sea die and suffer.

Finally, we would like to draw your attention to Alarmphone's new semi-annual report, published a few days ago, which provides information on growing violence at borders and new escape routes across the Mediterranean.



**MED REPORT**  
JULY 2025