

27.05.2016

**Comunicado de Watch de Med -Alarm Phone ante la situación actual en el mar mediterráneo y los sucesos de ayer**

## **La UE y las muertes en el mar: Las muertes calculadas y monitoreadas en el mediterráneo central**

Ayer, jueves 26 de mayo, los barcos de rescate tardaron más de cuatro horas en llegar. Cuatro horas de preocupaciones intentando apoyar a las personas ansiosas a bordo de un barco de madera sobrecargado. A las 6:21h de la mañana, el equipo de guardia del WatchThe Med Alarm Phone, efectuó una llamada SOS al Italian Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre – MRCC (Salvamento Marítimo Italiano) en Roma proporcionándoles las coordenadas GPS. Poco antes habíamos recibido una llamada de emergencia vía teléfono satélite. La persona al otro lado de la línea nos informó de 2 barcos, cada uno con unos 500 personas a bordo, entre ellos muchos refugiados sirios e iraquíes. A las 10.31 finalmente comenzó el rescate, pero una hora antes el segundo barco que se encontraba a la vista del primero ya había volcado. Hasta ahora no está claro cuántas personas se han ahogado o están desaparecidas. MRCC Roma en su comunicado de hoy habla de un barco que ha volcado con 96 supervivientes sin mencionar muertes. Sin embargo el barco privado de rescate Sea-Watch, que llegó al lugar de los sucesos al mediodía tuvo que rescatar cuerpos de personas ahogadas.

### **Muertes calculadas**

Durante los últimos tres días otra vez miles de refugiados y migrantes partieron de las costas libias en embarcaciones sobrecargadas en dirección a Sicilia: Alrededor de 2600 personas el martes, 3000 el miércoles y 4000 ayer, jueves. Nadie puede pretender sorprenderse, menos todavía todos los responsables de la política de inmigración de la UE. Pero siguen negándose de abolir el régimen mortal de visados y de abrir vías de entrada legales y seguras. Al contrario: La ruta de los Balcanes, la que ha costado mucho esfuerzo y lucha a los movimientos migratorios abrir el verano pasado, ha sido cerrada violentamente. Entre las víctimas de ayer en el mar mediterráneo vuelve a haber refugiados sirios e iraquíes. Como resultado del cierre de la ruta de los Balcanes y el acuerdo inhumano de la UE con Turquía, los refugiados que llegan a Grecia están siendo encarcelados en las islas griegas y amenazados con ser deportados a Turquía, mientras los que están en la Grecia continental se quedan sin ninguna perspectiva de poder salir

del país. Estos cambios de política obligan a lxs refugiadxs a coger la ruta vía Libia, mucho más peligrosa

### **Muertes monitoreadas**

Desde hace casi un año la operación militar EUNAVFOR MED/Sophia busca monitorear el mediterráneo central entre Libia e Italia. Su mandato principal es el de combatir las supuestas redes de tráfico. Estos 'cazadores de traficantes' están equipados con todo tipo de tecnología. La zona de costa de Libia se encuentra entre las zonas marítimas más vigiladas del mundo. ¿Es realmente tan difícil enviar un pequeño avión de vigilancia cada hora por esta ruta migratoria tan conocida, para localizar e inmediatamente rescatar barcos de refugiadxs? Seguro que no, pero sin embargo repetidamente los guardacostas italianos, iniciativas privadas y ONGs son lxs que evitan que ocurran desastres peores en el mar. Y cuando están ocupados llevando supervivientes hacia Sicilia simplemente faltan capacidades lo que significa que tragedias como las de ayer ocurren. Situaciones aparentemente deseadas por las autoridades responsables: Las muertes en el mar continúan. Y en la medida de lo posible los desastres se ocultan, se contienen o se minimizan para evitar la reaparición de protestas públicas.

Nosotrxs si protestamos, otra vez como tantas veces, por las muertes en las fronteras durante los últimos 20 años y las muertes de ayer. Si existieran rutas migratorias seguras y legales nadie se moriría en el mar. Las muertes en el mar no son una catástrofe natural ni un accidente. De hecho se trata de un resultado calculado de la política de frontera y visados de la UE. Las muertes en el mar son responsabilidad de seres humanos y mañana mismo podrían pasar a ser un capítulo oscuro de la historia si se abrieran las fronteras y se facilitaría el acceso libre a ferris. El largo verano de migración en los Balcanes ha demostrado que una vez que fronteras están abiertos deja de haber traficantes. Solo pagas sumas tan altas y escoges caminos tan peligrosas si Frontex y compañía te obligan.

Un mundo sin fronteras es posible y tanto Frontex como lxs 'traficantes' desaparecerían.

**En este sentido decimos: Ferries, no Frontex**

WatchTheMed Alarm Phone (27.05.2016)

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## **Adjunto:**

extractos de entradas al WTM-AP log book:

2016\_05\_25-CM-two boats in distress, direct call

Number of the boat: 0088216.....376

5:25am, we received a direct call from a Thuraya number. The person speaks Arabic so we cannot understand. All we can hear is "Libya" and "Italy". It sounds like they might be on a boat as there are engine sounds in the back.

5:34am, Our translator gets back to us and says that the man was talking about 2 big boats that had left from Libya. Apparently they called the Italian coastguards but they were not responding. And apparently he spoke of 1000 people on the boats!

5:40-5.50: We try to call the Thuraya number in different ways but cannot reach them. In between we checked their Thuraya credit and it was good, over 70. We checked again a few minutes later and it had gone down to 69.71.

6.10am: We call the Italian coastguards and we pass on the Thuraya number. He checks and then says that they have the same number. Apparently they were called by the boat but had the same problem that we had: they could not establish their position.

6.16am: their credit has minimally decreased, 69.22 now.

6.17am: We reached the man on the boat. We try to give him instructions on how to find the GPS position on Thuraya but the call was cut off. In the meantime, credit has gone down to 62.77

6.20-6.40: We receive more information from the boatpeople:

6.21am: We received their coordinates: N033 Deg 018'014.242 E012 Deg 029'037.940. The man is in panic and says they are about to sink. There are two boats, one boat is in a bad condition. The boats are metal boats (but later it became clear that they were wooden boats).

6.29-6.35am: We call MRCC Rome again and pass on the new details and the coordinates which they take.

6.51am: Credit has gone down to 56.32

6:58: We send an Email to MRCC and others with all details.

7:56am: the people on the boat called us again and we asked them to send us an update of their position. we receive the new position at 7.58: N33 23'57,062; E12 29'45.553

8:00am: we called MRCC Rome again, we provided them with the new coordinates.

8:12am: we sent an email to MRCC Rome and all the contacts we have, asking for urgent help and providing them with the new coordinates

8:19am: we received new GPS coordinates: N033 Deg 025'024.298 E012 Deg 029'052.131

8:21am: Credit on the phone of the migrants on the boats is 41

8:23am: the people on the boats called and told us, one of the big wooden boats is cracking and water started to fill the boat in the under level (the boat has obviously two levels), the people are trying desperately to empty the boat from water. in total there are around 1030 people on the three boats, the boats are made of wood. one of the big boats is dragging the other, on the small boat are 30 people. NEW: there are now three boats, because the two big boats, which were our case already the whole morning, we're crossing a third, small boat with migrant persons, and they continued to go on together, one big boat towing the two other boats!!!!

08:30am: we called the Italian Augusta Offshore company because their commercial boat ASSO VENTiquATTRO IMO 9235294 is really close to the boats in distress. They provided us with their operations department number which could give us the number of the ship Asso Ventiquattro, but the operation center opens not before 9am, so we have to wait...

8:35am: Credit from the Thuraya-phone on the boat is 39.5

8.35am: we tried calling another boat that is close called Minerva Zen (there main center is in Ukraine), but the call didn't go through

8.40am: we called the Malta coastguard. they already know about the boats and are working on the case. we updated them. they have another 17 cases or so they are working on. they said they are doing their best. the operator was very stressed on the phone.

8:45am: the people on the boat are calling, they told us one of the boats just sank, 500 people are in the water and many already died ...

8:47am: the boat people confirmed that we should call Libyan coast guard, we tried to reach the Libyan Coast Guard. We also decided to call the Tunisian Coast Guard and explained them the distress situation, gave them all the infos we have.

09:00am: we call the operational center of the Augusta Offshore Company and explain the situation. They say that their ship ASSO VENTIGUATTRO already knows about the case (they were contacted by MRCC rom) and that it is on his way there now, going to help rescuing the people on the sinking boat

9.18am: obviously a lot of different “players” are informed about the case (MRCC Italy in Rome, Malta, Sea-Eye, Sea-Watch, private ships...) and going to help, but until now the migrants didn't see any ships close to them.

9.20am: contact to the people on the boat: a lot of people already dead, our contact on the boat saw people drowning. They asked us where they should heading to, they're 100 km away from Sabratalah on the Libyan Coast and try to head in direction of Lampedusa. One big boat is broken, the second big Boat is now leaking too, the small boat is fine, but already full of people

9:28am: credit of the Thuraya-phone on the boat: 33

9.29am: we informed everybody, staying in touch with the people on the boat, but for the rest we're helpless

9.48am: we sent an SOS email with updates on the sinking boat:

*Hello,*

*Thanks to everyone who is involved, we are aware that there are morethan 10 boats, so thank you for your efforts. We have received unfortunate information that one of the boats sank already around the position N033 Deg 023'057.062 E012 Deg 029'045.553. A lot of people died. But for sure, there are people who know how to swim and most probably they can be saved and pulled from the water.*

*Thank you, xy*

*Watch the Med Alarm Phone*

09:56am: We called the Libyan coast guard, they were friendly, maybe because we were talking in Arabic with them, they got all the info and will help as soon as possible

10:00am: no answer from the people on the boats

10:03am: the people on the boats saw a ship, they estimate the distance 15 minutes away from them, but then the ship disappeared. we asked for new coordinates and urged them to use whatever objects they have that can reflect the light of the sun and use it in all direction to help ships spot them

10:05am: Since a long time we're watching the "Minerva Zen", the Ship from the ukrainian company, on Vesselfinder.com cruising around specific coordinates: N33 12 E12 42, looking like searching for something. This zone is close to the boat-people, but not exactly their latest coordinates we have. "Asso Ventiquattro", the italian Ship, is obviously also cruising more or less around the same area like the Minerva Zen

10:06am: credit of Thuraya phone on the boat is 22.6;

10.15am: the people on the boat do not answer

10.18am: The ship CP 324 SAR (search and rescue) is heading down to the area, now at N 33 deg 32' E 12 deg 30'

10.31am: at last, we receive a positive Info: we spoke to the boat people, they just informed us that the small boat was rescued (corresponding to our contact on the boats by an Italian commercial ship)!!!!!!

10.37am: more ships on their way to the latest gps-position of the boats in distress: ooc tiger, Asso Venticinque, Ringho

11.00am: no answer from the people on the boat; we wrote them an sms asking for newer position and informing them that they have more credit now – no answer so far

11.20am: no news from nowhere at the moment – we hope that in this case no news are also good news, which means the people on the boats are save at last. Vesselfinder still shows ships roaming around the place of the boats of our case.