

European Union Leaders Press Africa to Stem Refugee Influx



Valletta, November 12 (RHC)-- EU leaders have met African counterparts in Malta, pledging cash if they stem the flow of migrants across the Mediterranean. As they gathered in the Maltese capital Valletta for the second day of talks on Thursday, 14 migrants drowned in the latest boat sinking on their way to Europe.

Some 3,440 migrants have died or gone missing making the journey, including about 800 who died in a boat sinking off Libya in April.

According to the UN, some 150,000 people from African countries have made the dangerous journey across the Mediterranean so far this year, arriving mainly in Italy and Malta.

On Thursday, European leaders were looking to seal agreements with individual African countries to comply with European demands in exchange for millions in cash.

So far, only one deal has been signed with Ethiopia, according to a statement by the EU. Migrant arrivals from Africa, however, are dwarfed by the number of the people fleeing conflicts in the Middle East, chiefly in Syria.

According to existing figures, some 650,000 people have made their way to Europe so far via Turkey and Greece. The Syrian refugee crisis has raised tensions among EU members. It has also drawn Europe's

attention to a conflict which some of them have played a role to escalate through supporting militant groups.

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