

UN Urges EU to Save Illegal Migrants' Lives in Mediterranean



United Nations, February 11 (RHC)-- A spokeswoman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) urges the European Union to adopt proper strategies to save the lives of illegal migrants who try to reach the continent through the Mediterranean Sea.

On Tuesday, Carlotta Sami called on the EU to employ effective measures to save the lives of illegal migrants after 29 Africans lost their lives in the Mediterranean sea because of hypothermia while they were on their way to the Italian island of Lampedusa.

"On Sunday, the Italian coastguard in Lampedusa received a distress call from a satellite phone. It was coming from a dinghy with many refugees and migrants that had left from Libya... (and) were Sub-Saharan Africans. They reached them after many hours, because the conditions of the sea were really rough, and when the people were brought on board, 29 of them had died," said the UN official.

"We need a proper solution from the European Union to save lives in the Mediterranean," she stated, adding: "They are Syrians, they are Eritreans, they are Africans coming from countries where there is war... We have at least a 30-percent increase in comparison with the" first months of 2014.

According to the UNHCR figures, at least 3,419 illegal migrants died in the Mediterranean Sea last year. The UN also reported that more than 87,000 people arrived in Italy by the Mediterranean Sea just in the first seven months of 2014.

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