



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations (OIM)
Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM)

Press Briefing Notes

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Mediterranean Migrant Arrivals in 2016 Pass 76,000; Deaths Top 400 - IOM estimates that over 76,000 migrants and refugees have arrived in Europe by sea through the first six weeks of 2016. The daily average of nearly 2,000 arrivals is nearly ten times the daily average of a year ago.

Through 8 February, IOM has recorded 409 fatalities on Mediterranean routes: 319 of the dead or missing were on the Eastern Mediterranean route connecting Turkey to Greece and 90 on the Central Mediterranean route between North Africa and Italy.

During the same period in 2015, only 69 migrants and refugees died or went missing in the whole Mediterranean. All but nine were believed to have perished on the Central Mediterranean route. The nine who died in the Aegean were lost in one incident reported on 7 February 2015.

MEDITERRANEAN DEVELOPMENTS Arrivals by sea and deaths in the Mediterranean

1 Jan – 7 Feb 2016			1 Jan – 28 Feb 2015	
Country	Arrivals	Deaths	Arrivals	Deaths
Greece	70,365	319 (<i>Eastern Med route</i>)	3,952	428 (<i>includes all Med routes</i>)
Italy	5,898	90 (<i>Central Med route</i>)	7,882	
Estimated Total	76,263	409	11,834	428

IOM reports that since 1 January 2016 a total of 70,365 migrants and refugees have arrived in Greece from Turkey by sea. This brings the total number of arrivals to the Greek islands since 1 January 2015 to 924,015. IOM expects Greece to receive its one millionth migrant since the beginning of 2015 by sometime next month.

Between 1 January and 8 February 2016 IOM staff in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYRoM), together with border police and an NGO – Young Lawyers Association - registered the arrival of 68,025 migrants and refugees. Since 18 June 2015, the start of the crisis, a total of 429,460 migrants and refugees have been registered by the FYRoM authorities.

This brings the total number of migrants and asylum seekers who have entered the country since 19 June 2015 to 456,258. This includes 236,575 (51.85%) men; 80,579 (17.66%) women; 120,584 (26.48%) children and 18,250 (3.99%) unaccompanied children.

More information: www.iom.int - Facebook.com/iommigration

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A taxi strike has been ongoing in Gevgelija on FYRoM's southern border with Greece since 30 January 2016. Taxi drivers are blocking the railway lines and demanding that the government allow them to transport 500 migrants per day from Gevgelija to the Serbian border. Trains and taxis both charge EUR 25 per person. As a result, transport from the border has been intermittent and subject to negotiations between the taxi drivers and the authorities.

IOM Skopje is helping the government to upgrade and winterize its reception facilities. IOM, with funding from the Japanese Government and the Council of Europe Development Bank, has so far donated 21 containers, 344 bunk beds, 2,000 blankets, 2,000 pillows and sheets, and a fully-equipped kitchen tent.

IOM Skopje is also assisting the Ministry of Health in providing emergency medical assistance to migrants in transit. It has donated an ambulance funded by the Council of Europe Development Bank.

Since 23 January 2016, with funding from the Japanese Government, IOM also has organized six trainings on humanitarian border management, international protection standards, interviewing skills, registration and profiling techniques and procedures for total of 190 FYRoM border guards.

On 21st December 2015, IOM Skopje rolled out IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix, which is designed to inform the humanitarian response through a unified, systematic and sustainable data collection system that provides reliable data on locations, vulnerabilities, movements and needs of vulnerable migrants. Since the start of its DTM activities IOM Skopje has piloted 1,186 surveys.

For the latest Mediterranean Update infographic please go to:

http://missingmigrants.iom.int/sites/default/files/Mediterranean_Update_09_February_2016_0.pdf

*For latest arrivals and fatalities in the Mediterranean, please visit: <http://migration.iom.int/europe>
Learn more about Missing Migrants Project at: <http://missingmigrants.iom.int>*

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Over 900 Syrian Refugees Depart Turkey for Canada – This weekend (5-7/2) a third flight carrying nearly 300 Syrian refugees left Turkey for Canada. IOM Turkey, in collaboration with the Canadian and Turkish governments, has now facilitated the movement of just over 900 Syrians from Turkey, as part of Canada's commitment to resettle 25,000 Syrians from the region.

“This is significant because it is one of the first organized, orderly movements of Syrians from Turkey. With over 2.5 million Syrians now living in Turkey – not to mention asylum seekers from other countries - the strain on humanitarian actors here has steadily increased,” said IOM Turkey Chief of Mission Lado Gvilava.

“This year marks the fifth year of the conflict in Syria and funding is not coming through fast enough to meet the needs of this huge influx of people. We urgently need resources to address their immediate needs and to plan for their humanitarian transfer, resettlement or medium-term integration,” he added.

“I came to Turkey with my family. Last year, they crossed to Greece, and onwards to Europe. My wife and I could not go, because we didn't have money to pay the smugglers. But, this was for the best. Right now, I'm so happy that we are going to Canada,” said Mohammed, one of several Syrians who left Ankara for Toronto as part of the humanitarian transfer program.

IOM Turkey continues to support the Canadian government by providing transport, basic form-filling, biometrics, interpretation and logistics support. Canadian officials interview the refugees and make decisions on eligibility and admissibility including biometric recording and visa.

IOM then arranges their travel, including the flight, and provides translators, medical and operational escorts to ensure their safe arrival in Canada.

For more stories of resettlement to Canada, please go to www.canada.ca/refugees. To see more about Mohammed and others: <http://iamamigrant.org/stories/Canada>

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IOM Ghana Promotes Trafficking-free Livelihoods in Volta Region - IOM Ghana has disbursed micro-business assistance to 12 fishermen in the Biakoye district of Ghana's Volta Region to encourage them to pursue alternative income generating activities to fishing. The fishermen previously relied on trafficked children to help them in their work.

The objective of the aid was to prevent further trafficking in the area by supporting the fishermen in finding alternative child trafficking-free livelihood options that would help them earn a decent income.

The assistance was provided following sensitization activities carried out by IOM and partners with fishermen, parents and some children in four targeted Biakoye communities.

The beneficiaries of the funds were fishermen who released trafficked children working for them.

They were encouraged to form cooperatives to create synergies at the community level and enhance their chances to access microcredit from accredited microfinance groups. They were also encouraged to open bank accounts where the money will be deposited to facilitate proper monitoring of the funds disbursed.

Social Welfare officers visited beneficiaries individually to discuss income generating activities. Activities chosen included cash crop production, such as cassava, maize, groundnut, okra, and animal husbandry. Follow-up monitoring and management advice was also provided.

The impact of livelihood assistance and training of the fishermen will help them meet their basic needs, which in turn will contribute to reducing child trafficking in the region.

The program was supported by Global Grandparenting and USAIM as part of the rescue, reintegration rehabilitation of 20 trafficked children.

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Light Base Camps Aid Humanitarians Response on South Sudan Frontlines - To increase the humanitarian presence in deep-field locations in South Sudan, IOM is constructing light base camps in partnership with the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP), a voluntary network of seven European emergency management agencies.

Despite the signing of a peace agreement in August 2015, insecurity and humanitarian needs continue to drive displacement in South Sudan, where an estimated 1.69 million people are internally displaced. The majority of these are living in remote areas beyond displacement camps.

The light base camps allow relief workers to remain in areas of need for longer periods of time and support consistent humanitarian access. The tented camps provide accommodation and office space, as well as

solar-powered electricity and sanitation facilities. IHP engineers and IOM technicians deploy and set-up each camp, which is individually managed by a host organization.

“Accessing households in hard-to-reach areas is critical. As the crisis persists, families across the country are exhausting their coping mechanisms, experiencing multiple displacements and facing severe food insecurity. The light base camps are helping the humanitarian community to expand its reach to these communities,” said IOM South Sudan Chief of Mission David Derthick.

Last month, IHP and IOM completed a light base camp in Melut, Upper Nile, to host nearly 40 humanitarian staff working in the nearby UN protection of civilians (PoC) site and other remote areas of Melut.

IHP and IOM teams are preparing to construct camps in other areas, including Unity’s Leer and Koch counties and in Upper Nile’s Wau Shilluk, where IOM recently registered more than 20,400 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host community members.

Due to restricted access to Wau Shilluk during much of 2015, thousands of families fled to the nearby PoC site in Malakal in search of food and other relief assistance in July and August.

Since access to Wau Shilluk opened in October, many IDPs have returned. As such, the light base camp will enable sustained and effective relief operations that reach the communities where they live.

To further extend humanitarian aid in areas far from UN PoC sites, IOM also deploys frontline response teams.

IOM technical staff travels to displaced and host communities to provide lifesaving health assistance and shelter and households supplies, as well as improved water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) conditions.

Recent rapid response operations provided WASH assistance in Lakes and Jonglei and helped communities in Wau Shilluk to rebuild shelters.

IOM is also continuing its humanitarian operations for IDPs seeking protection in UN PoC sites. While the population is stable in most sites, the Bentiu PoC in Unity continues to receive new arrivals, with over 1,700 IDPs arriving last week alone.

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