



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

UN Migration Agency Alarmed Following Collision of Navy Vessel, Migrant Boat near Tunisia

Tunis – Eight migrants have died in the wake of a collision between a Tunisian navy vessel and a boat reportedly carrying 87 migrants on Sunday, 8 October. A further 38 migrants have been rescued and approximately 41 are still missing.

The tragic incident happened in the early hours of Sunday about 54 kilometers off Kerkennah Island, Tunisia. The migrants' boat is believed to have left from the Tunisian port of Sfax and was headed towards Italy.

The 38 survivors, all Tunisian nationals, were rescued from the sea by the Tunisian navy on board the vessel involved in the Collision. They were brought back to Sfax and released shortly after. Tunisian authorities announced yesterday (10/10) that they are undertaking a rigorous investigation into the circumstances of the incident.

IOM, the UN Migration Agency is following up on the status of the missing migrants. "We are saddened with this tragedy that is affecting so many migrants and their families" said Lorena Lando, IOM Tunisia Chief of Mission. "IOM is committed to support and advocate for safe and dignified migration. We are concerned about the increasing events of irregular migration from Tunisian coasts and we work closely with all stakeholders to develop long-term solutions," added Lando.

"The number of Tunisian migrants who reached Italy by sea has increased," said Federico Soda, Director of IOM's Coordination Office for the Mediterranean, commenting the recent trends. "From January to August 2017, 1357 Tunisians have reached the Italian coast, while IOM estimates that over 1400 have arrived during the month of September 2017 alone. While the increase of September it is quite unusual, numbers per se are quite low compared to the arrivals registered in Italy in 2017," said Soda.

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