

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSARIAT ON REFUGEES

Study Guide for Zurich Model United Nations

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YOUR CHAIRS



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I've completed my Bachelor's degree in Political Science and History of the Modern Era at the University of Zurich in December 2016. Currently, I'm studying for my Master's in International Affairs at IHEID in Geneva. During my studies in Zurich, I've been a member of the MUN team and took part in several conferences as a delegate. In last year's edition of the ZuMUN conference, I chaired the WHO committee and had such a blast that I needed to come back this year. I like being involved in the MUN community because it provides you with opportunities to exchange ideas and get to know new people. In my spare time, I like to read, meet friends and watch my favorite TV shows.



Johanna Friege

I come from a moderately-sized city in the south of Germany and currently live in an even smaller city in the UK, where I am studying Natural Sciences. When I'm not in lectures or practicals, I like to spend my time at concerts, exploring new places, running, or in the kitchen with friends (to load up on carbs after the aforementioned run). I also love getting involved with university life through societies to organise conferences or volunteer at local schools. MUN has been a part of my life throughout high school, and so far I have attended conferences as a press member, delegate, chair, and organiser. I am looking forward to her first conference during her university time, and am excited to come to Zurich to get to know a new city, a new conference, and lots of new faces ready for some productive and exciting debate in the UN-HCR!

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSARIAT ON REFUGEES (UNHCR)

The United Nations General Assembly decided to create the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the 3rd December 1949, in reaction to the displacement created by the Second World War, to help millions of Europeans who had fled or lost their homes.¹ Today UNHCR has 10,966 national and international staff working in 130 countries, with most operations based in the field.² The organization works in a total of 130 countries with a budget of USD \$6.54 billion in 2016.³ UNHCR's headquarters are located in Geneva, Switzerland.

Mandate

The 1951 Refugee Convention is the key legal document that forms the basis of the UNHCR work. Ratified by 145 State parties, it defines the term 'refugee' and outlines the rights of the displaced, as well as the legal obligations of States to protect them.⁴ The core principle is non-refoulement, which asserts that a refugee should not be returned to a country where they face serious threats to their life or freedom. This is now considered a rule of customary international law.⁵

UNHCR serves as the 'guardian' of the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol. According to the Convention, states are expected to cooperate with us in ensuring that the rights of refugees are respected and protected.⁶ In 2003, the General Assembly extended the organization's mandate "until the refugee problem is solved."⁷

In sum UNHCR works to ensure that everybody has the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge, having fled violence, persecution, war or disaster at home and provided vital assistance to refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced and stateless people, many of whom have nobody left to turn to.⁸

Structure

UNHCR is governed by the UN General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The UNHCR Executive Committee approves the agency's biennial programs

¹ UNHCR (2018): [History of the UNHCR](#).

² UNHCR (2018): [Governance and Oversight](#).

³ UNHCR (2018): [History of the UNHCR](#).

⁴ UNHCR (2018): [The 1951 Refugee Convention](#).

⁵ UNHCR (2018): [The 1951 Refugee Convention](#).

⁶ UNHCR (2018): [The 1951 Refugee Convention](#).

⁷ UNHCR (2018): [Governance and Oversight](#).

⁸ UNHCR (2018): [About Us](#).

and the corresponding budget. These are presented by the High Commissioner, who is appointed by the UN General Assembly.⁹

The High Commissioner is responsible for the direction and control of UNHCR. He or she directs our work with the assistance of a Deputy High Commissioner and Assistant High Commissioners for Protection and Operations. Filippo Grandi is the 11th and current United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. He was elected by the UN General Assembly on 1 January 2016 to serve a five-year term, until 31 December 2020.¹⁰

⁹ UNHCR (2018): [Governance and Oversight](#).

¹⁰ UNHCR (2018): [Governance and Oversight](#).

THE SITUATION OF SUB-SAHARAN MIGRANTS IN LIBYA

Since the 2011 mass protests in Libya and the subsequent UN intervention which lead ultimately to the death of the head of state Muammar Gaddafi, Libya has become a fragile State characterized by extremely high levels of violence. The chaos allowed smuggling networks to thrive, opening up a lucrative market designed to profit off trading humans like other goods and commodities. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated in September 2016 that about 770,000 up to 1 million migrants and asylum seekers were in Libya, many are trying to reach Europe.¹¹ The International Organization for Migration estimates that nearly 103,175 migrants from Libya have landed in Europe in 2017, down from 363,401 in 2016.¹² Therefore, Libya is by far the most important transit point for refugees and migrants aiming to reach Europe, with over 90 percent of sea arrivals to Italy having departed from Libya.¹³ The share of sub-Saharan Africans in landing Europe increased steadily over the last decade. According to the UNHCR, the share of sub-Saharan Africans landing in Europe increased from 5% to 15% from 2015 to 2016. Many migrants are fleeing from conflict or are in search for a better life.

Sub-Saharan Migrants

The situation is so challenging for the region because of the mixed movement of refugees and migrants.¹⁴ Many have moved because of a general lack of opportunities, fear of persecution and violence, or a combination of both. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest emigration rate globally. According to UN population statistics, the region has an emigration rate of 1.5 percent, against a global average of around 1 percent.¹⁵ There were about 6.6 million Sub-Saharan African migrants outside the region in 2013, which is 2½ times the number recorded in 1990. Also, there has been a marked change in the composition of Sub-Saharan Africa migrants.¹⁶ In 1990 about 40 percent of migrants moved for economic reasons; by 2013 this share had risen to 90 percent.¹⁷

Overall the number of people displaced by conflict and persecution in sub-Saharan Africa increased over the last few year, bringing the total number of persons of concern to UNHCR in the region to an estimated 20 million.¹⁸ However, concerning the refugee crisis in Europe sub-Saharan Africans rank well behind the Middle East as a source of refugees and asylum

¹¹ IOM (2018): [IOM Libya Brief](#).

¹² IOM (2017): [Mediterranean Update. Migrations Flows Europe: Arrivals and Deaths](#).

¹³ UNHCR (2017): [Expanded Response in Libya](#).

¹⁴ UNHCR (2017): [Update on UNHCR's operations in Africa](#).

¹⁵ ILO (2016): [Facing the growing unemployment challenges in Africa](#).

¹⁶ IMF (2016): [Sub-Saharan African Migration: Patterns and Spillovers](#).

¹⁷ IMF (2016): [Sub-Saharan African Migration: Patterns and Spillovers](#).

¹⁸ UNHCR (2017): [Update on UNHCR's operations in Africa](#).

seekers to Europe. In 2014, Sub-Saharan African refugees accounted for only 8 percent of the almost 3 million refugees in Europe. Even though the contribution of sub-Saharan Africans to the refugee crisis in Europe is small in comparison with other groups of refugees, they made headlines because of their growing numbers: The number of refugees from sub-Saharan Africa in Europe has been on a gradual rise over the past two decades. In 2015, the year of the unprecedented rise in asylum seekers in Europe, sub-Saharan African asylum seekers accounted for 5 percent of the total. From January to June 2016 however, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees recorded over 260,000 sea arrivals, out of which 15 percent were mainly sub-Saharan African.¹⁹

Most of the migrants and refugees come from Senegal, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria as well as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Sudan and the Horn of Africa. The top three destinations of the refugees were Italy, France, and Germany. An important factor in explaining the choice of destination for sub-Saharan migrants is the existence of diasporas, implying that sub-Saharan African migrants take more advantage of the help and network of diasporas. This can be illustrated by the fact that about 85 percent of the total sub-Saharan African diaspora in the rest of the world is located in OECD countries. The United States, the United Kingdom, and France host about 50 percent of the total sub-Saharan African diaspora. Further, the provision of health services attracts migrants from sub-Saharan countries more than migrants from other places. Previous colonial ties have not much of an influence, in deciding the destination.²⁰

¹⁹ IMF (2016): [Sub-Saharan African Migration: Patterns and Spillovers](#).

²⁰ IMF (2016): [Sub-Saharan African Migration: Patterns and Spillovers](#).

Routes to a better life

Main migration routes into Europe from Africa and the Middle East.

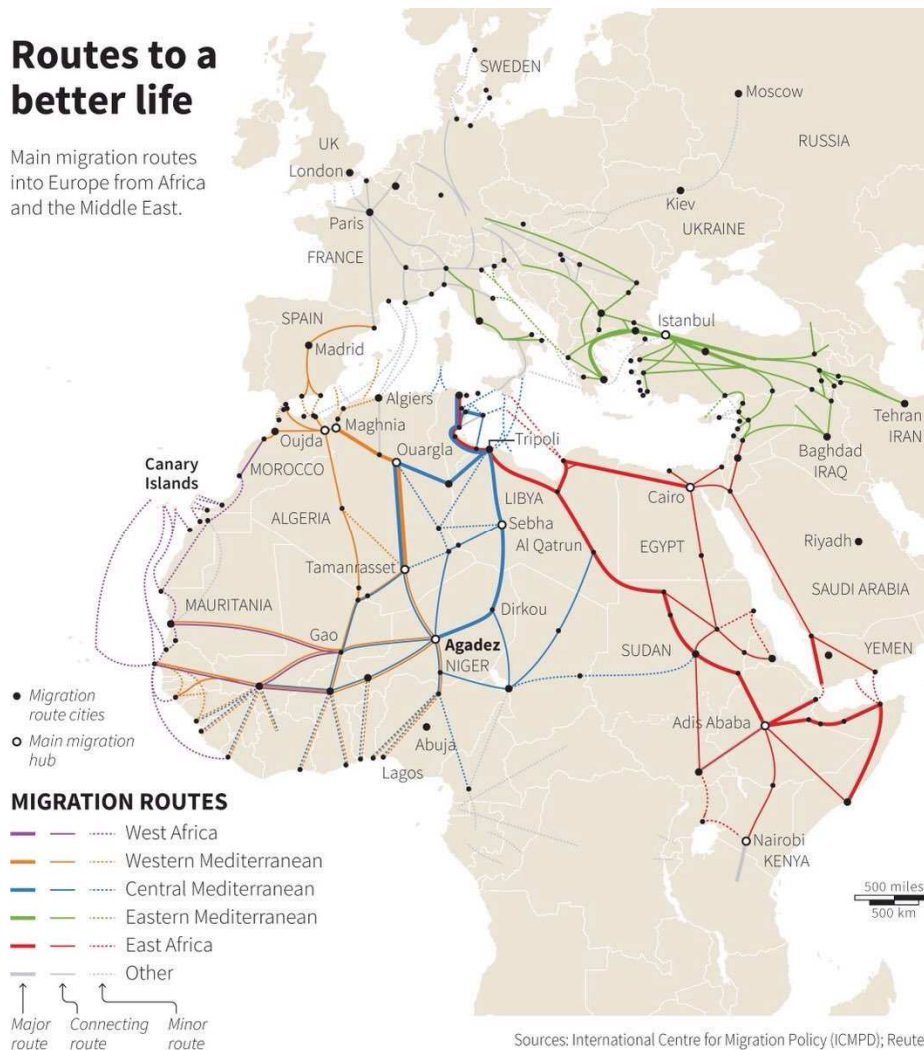


Image 1: Migration routes through Africa

Reasons for Migration

The wave of migration does not stem from a single source but from several countries that experience different push factors. However, two factors are common to all the sub-Saharan countries affected by the mass emigration: bad economic prospects and increased access to technology. Evidence indicates that lack of decent work opportunities – including a high incidence of working poverty and lack of adequate social protection – is a significant determinant of this emigration.²¹ Nearly 37 percent of the world's extreme working poor reside in sub-Saharan Africa, where 34.3 percent of the region's employed population live below the poverty threshold of US\$1.90 per day and 64 percent on less than US\$3.10 a day.²²

²¹ ILO (2016): [Facing the growing unemployment challenges in Africa.](#)

²² ILO (2016): [World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2016.](#)

Social media made it easier to project the notion that a dramatically improved lifestyle was easily within reach. Further, technology facilitated the contact with smugglers which are now just a phone call away.²³

In addition to those factors, each country experiences its own push factors which are distinct from each other. Eritrea, for example, is notorious for one of the worst human rights records in the world and for condemning citizens to lifetimes of mandatory military service. In Somalia, the rise of al-Shabaab rebels motivates many to flee the country. Along the western route to Libya, many also try to escape terror and lack of perspectives: It is a mix of Nigerians displaced by the militant insurgent group Boko Haram, Gambians escaping a brutal authoritarian government, or Senegalese existing on the brink of survival.²⁴

There is a complex web of forces at work that has uprooted entire generations and no two countries are the same. Therefore, there is no one-size-fits-all solution for the root causes of this mass migration.

Situation in Libya

Since the 2011 UN Security Council intervention, Libya has become a fragile State characterized by extremely high levels of violence. The power vacuum created by the death of the head of state, Muammar Gaddafi, was filled by rivaling factions fighting to take his place.²⁵ A transitional government failed to implement rule of law in the country, which has splintered into several factions of militias, tribes, and gangs.²⁶ For migrants and refugees who find few or no legal migration pathways to Europe, Libya's lawlessness means both risk and opportunity.²⁷ The chaos allowed smuggling networks to thrive, opening a lucrative market designed to profit off trading humans.²⁸ Mohamed Haay Sandu, a tribal leader, stated, "For many of us, facilitating the passage of migrants has become a way of earning money. The economy is on the brink of collapse. Around 15 percent of our people work in migrant trafficking. It is the main source of income ... many of our young people are without hope."²⁹

²³ MSNBC (2018): [Damned for Trying.](#)

²⁴ MSNBC (2018): [Damned for Trying.](#)

²⁵ MSNBC (2018): [Damned for Trying.](#)

²⁶ Time (2017): [The Libyan Slave Trade Has Shocked the World. Here's What You Should Know.](#)

²⁷ MSNBC (2018): [Damned for Trying.](#)

²⁸ MSNBC (2018): [Damned for Trying.](#)

²⁹ Brookings Institute (2017): [The tragedy of migrants in Libya.](#)

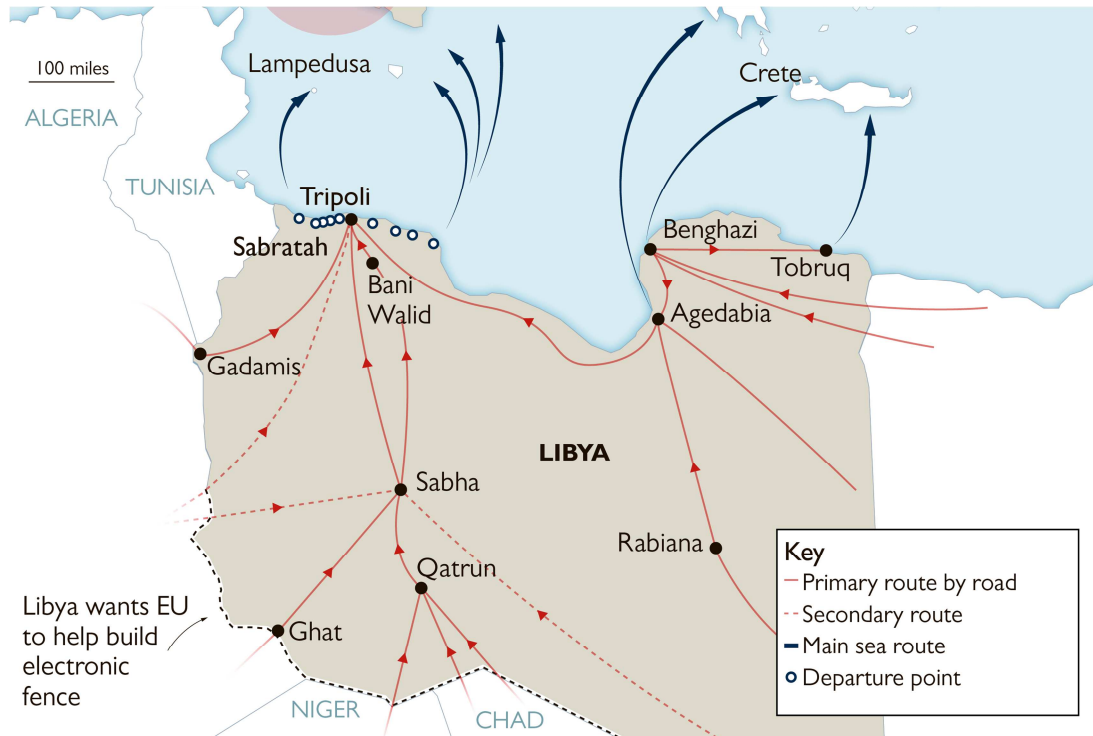


Image 2: Migration routes inside Libya

Libya has become by far the most important transit point for refugees and migrants aiming to reach Europe.³⁰ Most of the boat departures from Libya towards Italy take place from the north-west of Libya, from the coastal cities of Zuwara, Sabratah, Garabulli, located east of Tripoli, and, to a lesser extent, from Misratah. Zuwara, in particular, is a large smuggling hub.³¹ In addition, Libya continues to host a large number of refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants.³²

Migrants caught in the crossfire of the power struggle in Libya are often used as pawns. Thousands languish in overcrowded detention centers, and allegations of torture and unsanitary conditions have led to concerns of widespread human rights violations.³³ The lack of stability, widespread human rights abuses and the current economic crisis push some of those initially intending to stay to attempt the crossing towards Europe.³⁴ Established communities of refugees and migrants who have been working and residing in Libya for several

³⁰ UNHCR (2017): [Expanded Response in Libya](#).

³¹ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

³² UNHCR (2017): [Expanded Response in Libya](#).

³³ MSNBC (2018): [Damned for Trying](#).

³⁴ UNHCR (2017): [Expanded Response in Libya](#).

years have also started to leave by boat as their lives have increasingly been endangered by conflict.³⁵

An additional problem is that the Libyan authorities only recognize the following nationalities and groups as “coming from refugee-producing countries”: Oromo Ethiopians, Eritreans, Iraqis, Somalis, Syrians, Palestinians, and Sudanese from Darfur.³⁶

Human trafficking and smuggling

Migrants traveling to Libya face abuses, including abductions for ransom, torture and other ill-treatment, and in some cases rape and other forms of sexual violence at all stages of the smuggling routes running from the west and east Africa towards the Libyan coast.³⁷

Most often migrants are handed over to criminal groups upon entry to Libya at the country’s southern borders or in major transit cities along the migration routes such as Ajdabya and Sabha. At times, the smugglers themselves hold the migrants and refugees in remote areas in the desert forcing them to call their families to pay a ransom. Since 2013 Amnesty International has received numerous reports of abductions for ransom of sub-Saharan migrants and refugees in Libya, notably along the different smuggling routes in the country. Such abductions appear to have been on the rise since 2014 as Libya has descended into further chaos and violence. According to testimonies, ransoms asked by smugglers and criminal groups have ranged from 200 USD to approximately 8,000 USD. Those who are unable to pay the ransoms face exploitation and are forced to work for free for the smugglers. Usually, they are forced to clean houses, wash cars or work on farms. In some cases, women who are unable to pay the ransom have been coerced into sex in exchange for being released or allowed to continue the journey.³⁸

Those migrants who make it to the Libyan coast are often held prior to their departure towards Europe in private houses for periods ranging from several days to two or three months while smugglers gather more passengers.³⁹ In the vast majority of Amnesty International’s interviews, it also emerged that smugglers overload boats with people, do not provide safety equipment such as life jackets, and frequently load insufficient fuel onto the boat. In addition, in many cases no trained captain is put in charge of boats and summary instructions are given to a few of the passengers instead. Even in cases where smugglers acted as captains, they were generally not trained seafarers.⁴⁰

³⁵ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

³⁶ UNHCR (2017): [Expanded Response in Libya](#).

³⁷ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

³⁸ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

³⁹ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

⁴⁰ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

Detention centers

Migrants and refugees caught attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea are held in detention centers following their interception and arrest by the Libyan coastguard or militias acting on their own initiative in the absence of strong state institutions.⁴¹ IOM estimates that 4 percent of the total migrant population are being detained.⁴² UNHCR estimates that there are about 30 government-run detention centers in Libya, but that does not include clandestine facilities run by traffickers and militias.⁴³ According to Libya's department of combating illegal migration (DCIM), 19,900 people were being held in facilities under its control in early November, up from about 7,000 in mid-September 2017.⁴⁴ IOM estimates that another 20,000 may be in detention centers controlled by traffickers, militias, and other armed groups.⁴⁵

The Directorate for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM) applies strict migration and punitive procedures, including arbitrary arrest, detention, and deportation, without distinction between migrant workers, asylum seekers, refugees, migrants in transit, and victims of trafficking.⁴⁶

"In general, conditions are really bad in these detention centers," says UNHCR Libya chief Roberto Mignone. "At best, they are more or less functional, but serious human rights violations and sexual assaults are committed there."⁴⁷ Directors of two DCIM centers have reported to Amnesty International shortages in food and basic necessities, such as cleaning products, medicine, and food.⁴⁸

Foreign nationals, particularly those from sub-Saharan countries, and including refugees and asylum-seekers, continue to be exploited by guards inside immigration detention centers. Several men interviewed between August 2014 and March 2015 told Amnesty International that they were made to work without pay at the facilities in exchange for their eventual release. Most often, they reported being asked to clean, build or renovate the immigration detention centers where they were held. Instead of being released, however, they continued to face abuses.⁴⁹

Migrant women and refugees held in immigration detention centers have reported sexual harassment and sexual violence, as well as other forms of torture and other ill-treatment. In

⁴¹ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

⁴² Brookings Institute (2017): [The tragedy of migrants in Libya](#).

⁴³ The Guardian (2017): [Libyan path to Europe turns into a dead end for desperate migrants](#).

⁴⁴ The Guardian (2017): [EU's policy of helping Libya intercept migrants is 'inhuman', says UN](#).

⁴⁵ Brookings Institute (2017): [The tragedy of migrants in Libya](#).

⁴⁶ IOM (2017): [IOM Libya 2017-2019: Migration Crisis Operational Framework \(MCOF\)](#).

⁴⁷ The Guardian (2017): [Libyan path to Europe turns into dead end for desperate migrants](#).

⁴⁸ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

⁴⁹ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

particular, the complete absence of female guards in any of these facilities, in violation of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, exposes women to sexual and gender-based violence.⁵⁰

Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said UN staff members had visited four DCIM facilities earlier this month and were shocked by what they saw. "[There were] thousands of emaciated and traumatized men, women and children piled on top of each other, locked up in hangars with no access to the most basic necessities, and stripped of their human dignity," he said.⁵¹ The UN urged Libyan authorities to take concrete steps to halt violations and abuses in the detention centers and stop detaining migrants.⁵²

Racism and other discrimination

Migrants from sub-Saharan countries, stand out among the swirl of migrants and are an automatic target for abuse for one obvious reason: their skin color is darker. Libyan smugglers call them "burned," a racial epithet sometimes used in the country for people whose skin color is black.⁵³ A report from UNICEF and IOM states that among those at particular risk are people traveling alone, those with low levels of education, children of any age and migrants who have endured long journeys. But people from sub-Saharan Africa are most vulnerable of all, simply because of their skin color, the report says. An adolescent boy from sub-Saharan Africa, even one who has secondary education and travels in a group along the Central Mediterranean route, faces a 75 percent risk of being exploited. If he came from another region, where skin tones are lighter, the risk would drop to 38 percent, it says.⁵⁴

Even before the start of the current conflicts, foreign nationals, particularly those from sub-Saharan Africa, were vulnerable to labor exploitation by their Libyan employers, who are aware that they are unable to complain or seek remedy. Their situation has become more difficult as Libya has descended into further chaos and lawlessness. Xenophobia and racism against migrants appear to be on the rise, especially in coastal areas, where foreign nationals are blamed for the rise of criminal groups and smuggling networks.^{55 56}

All migrants and refugees interviewed by Amnesty International between August 2014 and March 2015 reported being forced to work without pay for periods ranging from days to several months. Women migrants working as housekeepers for Libyan families reported

⁵⁰ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

⁵¹ The Guardian (2017): [EU's policy of helping Libya intercept migrants is 'inhuman', says UN](#).

⁵² The Guardian (2017): [EU's policy of helping Libya intercept migrants is 'inhuman', says UN](#).

⁵³ New York Times (2017): [Sub-Saharan African Migrants Face Old Enemy in Libya: Bigotry](#).

⁵⁴ New York Times (2017): [Sub-Saharan African Migrants Face Old Enemy in Libya: Bigotry](#).

⁵⁵ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty](#).

⁵⁶ criminal groups appear to be transnational and usually include nationals from sub-Saharan African countries in addition to Libyan nationals

being beaten and threatened with guns by their employers each time they inquired about their salaries. In some cases, they were barred from communicating with their families by having their mobile phones confiscated and were prevented from leaving the homes in which they worked.⁵⁷

Measures taken to alleviate the situation

As the route through north Africa becomes increasingly fraught, many migrants have relinquished their dreams of ever reaching European shores. This year, more than 8,800 individuals have opted to voluntarily return home on repatriation flights organized by the IOM. Since 2015, the IOM has repatriated 13,000 people from Libya under a voluntary program.⁵⁸

For especially vulnerable persons UNHCR has called for 40,000 additional resettlement places in transit and asylum countries along central Mediterranean routes. However, to date, there were only 10,500 available places.⁵⁹ For refugees from sub-Saharan Africa, the situation is especially acute – with just 18,000 available places for more than half a million refugees.⁶⁰

UNHCR also made specific recommendations for combatting human trafficking, including the freezing of assets, travel bans, disruption of revenues and materials, and robust prosecution of traffickers.⁶¹ UNICEF and other UN organizations called for an expansion of safe and regular migration channels to dampen the demand for smugglers while fighting trafficking and exploitation.⁶²

But Doyle, the IOM spokesperson, says more needs to be done to stop migration at its core, particularly from tech companies who own online platforms where traffickers can falsely lure people into paying smugglers.⁶³

EU Operation Sophia and curbing human smuggling

On the 22.06.2015 the European Union started an anti-immigrant trafficking operation, called Operation Sophia. The mandate of the mission currently runs out on the 31.12.2018.

⁵⁷ Amnesty International (2015): [Libya is full of cruelty.](#)

⁵⁸ CNN (2017): [People for Sale. Where lives are auctioned for \\$400.](#)

⁵⁹ UN (2017): [High Commissioner for Refugees Calls Slavery, Other Abuses in Libya 'Abomination' That Can No Longer Be Ignored, while Briefing Security Council.](#)

⁶⁰ UNHCR (2017): [Match resettlement commitments with action: UN Refugee Chief.](#)

⁶¹ UN (2017): [High Commissioner for Refugees Calls Slavery, Other Abuses in Libya 'Abomination' That Can No Longer Be Ignored, while Briefing Security Council.](#)

⁶² UNICEF (2017): [Harrowing Journeys. Children and youth on the move across the Mediterranean Sea, at risk of trafficking and exploitation.](#)

⁶³ CNN (2017): [People for Sale. Where lives are auctioned for \\$400.](#)

The tasks of the mission include the contribution to the disruption of human smuggling and trafficking in the Mediterranean Sea and prevent loss of life at sea.⁶⁴

According to a report issued by the UK House of Lords the EU naval ships had been successful in destroying 452 boats that had been used in smuggling operations.⁶⁵ But this had led to a change in the “business model” used by the smugglers, who were no longer sending larger vessels with 500 or 600 people or more aboard which were capable of reaching the center of the Mediterranean. Instead, inflatable boats were being picked up 12 miles off the coast.⁶⁶ This change in smuggling strategy made the crossing of the Mediterranean Sea more dangerous and increases the number of deaths. Therefore, the House of Lords recommended to stop the anti-smuggling mission but to continue the rescue of people in the Mediterranean Sea because this part of the mission had been a success rescuing the lives of more than 33,830 people.⁶⁷

Italy and the E.U. also have worked to train and equip the fledgling Libyan coast guard to turn back migrant ships, an effort that has stopped up to 16,000 people so far this year, according to data compiled by the U.N. refugee agency.⁶⁸ In exchange, Italy will provide money, technology, medicine, and training to set up migrant holding centers in the country.⁶⁹

“The suffering of migrants detained in Libya is an outrage to the conscience of humanity,” said the UN human rights chief, Zeid Ra’ad al-Hussein, in a statement issued on Tuesday. “The European Union’s policy of assisting the Libyan coastguard to intercept and return migrants in the Mediterranean [is] inhuman.”⁷⁰ Reacting to Hussein’s charges, an EU spokesperson said Brussels was funding UN agencies on the ground in Libya that was working to protect people. “We believe that the detention centers in Libya must be closed. The situation in these camps is unacceptable,” the spokesperson said in a statement. The EU wanted rescued people to be brought to “reception centers that meet international humanitarian standards”, they said, while at the same time improving the Libyan coastguard’s capacity to prevent deaths at sea.⁷¹

Officers in the Libyan Coast Guard were trained by the Italians to intercept and rescue migrant boats near the Libyan coast before they reach international waters. Normally, Europe-

⁶⁴ EEAS (2018): [Mission EUNAVFOR MED - Operation SOPHIA at a glance.](#)

⁶⁵ The Guardian (2017): [EU-UK naval mission on people-smuggling led to more deaths, report says.](#)

⁶⁶ The Guardian (2017): [EU-UK naval mission on people-smuggling led to more deaths, report says.](#)

⁶⁷ The Guardian (2017): [EU-UK naval mission on people-smuggling led to more deaths, report says.](#)

⁶⁸ Washington Post (2017): [Could the flow of migrants to Europe be stopped?.](#)

⁶⁹ New York Times (2017): [Can E.U. Shift Migrant Crisis to the Source? In Libya, the Odds Are Long.](#)

⁷⁰ The Guardian (2017): [EU's policy of helping Libya intercept migrants is 'inhuman'. says UN.](#)

⁷¹ The Guardian (2017): [EU's policy of helping Libya intercept migrants is 'inhuman'. says UN.](#)

an forces intercept migrant boats and must take them to Italy.⁷² But if the migrants are picked up by the Libyans in their own waters, they can be taken back to Libya instead.⁷³ For European leaders, training the Libyan Coast Guard is in many ways an attempt, against long odds, to shift the answer to Europe's migration crisis off its shores, and deal with it at the source.⁷⁴

European leaders also started to work intensively in sub-Saharan Africa, tying development aid to countries' willingness to accept returnees from Europe and offering fresh assistance in exchange for pledges to cut flows.⁷⁵ At the EU Valletta Summit, the creation of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa was agreed on, which shall support the most fragile and affected African countries. It focuses on three regions: The Sahel Region and Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa, and North Africa, comprising a total of 25 countries, including 21 sub-Saharan African countries.⁷⁶ By May 2017 the available resources have summed up to more than 2.8 billion euros.⁷⁷ The fund focuses on four priority sectors: economic programs (create employment opportunities), resilience (support basic services for local populations), migration management as well as stability and governance.⁷⁸

Emergency evacuation deal

A recent CNN report⁷⁹ provided video evidence of what human rights organizations and aid agencies have been warning for years: In addition to facing utterly dismal conditions in Libyan detention camps, migrants are being bought and sold as slaves.⁸⁰ Further, the EU efforts to curb the arrival of boats in Europe and the Libyan's coastguard's crackdown led to the overcrowding of the detention centers and a deterioration of the already bad conditions.

African and European leaders met at a summit in the Ivory Coast on the 29. November 2017 and agreed on an urgent evacuation plan that would see about 15,000 people flown out of Libya. The leaders of Libya, France, Germany, Chad, Niger and four other countries agreed to attempt a massive and imminent evacuation of migrants who are trapped in the detention

⁷² New York Times (2017): [Can E.U. Shift Migrant Crisis to the Source? In Libya, the Odds Are Long.](#)

⁷³ New York Times (2017): [Can E.U. Shift Migrant Crisis to the Source? In Libya, the Odds Are Long.](#)

⁷⁴ New York Times (2017): [Can E.U. Shift Migrant Crisis to the Source? In Libya, the Odds Are Long.](#)

⁷⁵ Washington Post (2017): [Could the flow of migrants to Europe be stopped?](#)

⁷⁶ Österreichische Gesellschaft für Europapolitik:
[The refugee crisis and the situation in Sub-Saharan Africa.](#)

⁷⁷ Österreichische Gesellschaft für Europapolitik:
[The refugee crisis and the situation in Sub-Saharan Africa.](#)

⁷⁸ Österreichische Gesellschaft für Europapolitik:
[The refugee crisis and the situation in Sub-Saharan Africa.](#)

⁷⁹ For original report: <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/11/14/africa/libya-migrant-auctions/index.html>

⁸⁰ Washington Post (2017): [African and European leaders want to evacuate thousands mired in Libyan slave trade.](#)

centers. Most of the migrants will be sent back to their home countries.⁸¹ The government also agreed to open a transit center for vulnerable refugees after months of negotiations. The center is intended to safely house people before they are resettled or sent to a third country.⁸² The deal further included initiatives to target traffickers, including setting up a task force to dismantle trafficking networks.⁸³ According to Macron, the African Union, European Union, and United Nations will work together to freeze the assets of human traffickers, some of whom may be referable to the International Criminal Court.⁸⁴

One of the African Union's top officials, Moussa Faki Mahamat, told the gathered leaders that by his organization's estimates, there could be anywhere between 400,000 to 700,000 African migrants stuck in Libya against their will. The plans drafted on the 29. November indicates that the first evacuation push will target 3,800 migrants.⁸⁵ A night earlier, Libyan authorities in conjunction with the United Nations' refugee agency flew 240 Nigerians back to their country of origin.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Time (2017): [The Libyan Slave Trade Has Shocked the World. Here's What You Should Know.](#)

⁸² Time (2017): [The Libyan Slave Trade Has Shocked the World. Here's What You Should Know.](#)

⁸³ Time (2017): [The Libyan Slave Trade Has Shocked the World. Here's What You Should Know.](#)

⁸⁴ Washington Post (2017): [African and European leaders want to evacuate thousands mired in Libyan slave trade.](#)

⁸⁵ Washington Post (2017): [African and European leaders want to evacuate thousands mired in Libyan slave trade.](#)

⁸⁶ Washington Post (2017): [African and European leaders want to evacuate thousands mired in Libyan slave trade.](#)

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION NEEDS TO ADDRESS

- How can the problem of lack of prospects for sub-Saharan migrants be addressed?
- How can we prevent that the migrants who are sent back to their home countries end up in Libya again?
- How can we address the complex web of conflict and lack of economic perspectives in sub-Sahara Africa?
- How can we prevent that migrants and refugees die on migration routes?
- Should there be more legal ways to get to Europe for refugees?
- How can human trafficking and smuggling be combatted effectively?
- What should be done about the chaotic situation in Libya?
- How to prevent a bottle-neck situation in Libya
- How can the conditions in detention centers be improved?
- How can the problem of racism and other discriminations against migrants in Libya be addressed?
- How can we prevent migrants being coerced into slavery or forced labor?
- How to balance short-term (e.g. evacuation) and long-term (e.g. financial support) measures to alleviate the crisis?

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