

Update no 15 Humanitarian Situation in Libya and the Neighbouring Countries

31 March 2011

Highlights

- The Humanitarian Evacuation Cell (HEC) transitioned from UNHCR Headquarters to IOM Headquarters as of 30 March 2011. New contact details are iomairops@iom.int, +41 22 717 9395, +41 22 717 9400. All former HEC telephone and email accounts will be automatically forwarded. IOM assumed full responsibility for the humanitarian evacuation operation as of 28 March, while UNHCR will remain ready at any time to resume its supporting role to IOM. IOM continues to appeal for donor support for the ongoing air evacuation. The return of third country nationals to Chad is now a priority both in Egypt and in Tunisia, given the high numbers who have recently fled Libya. Flights for Sudanese from Tunisia also remain a priority.
- The UN Resident Coordinator for Tunisia, Mohammed Belhocine, visited the border area in Ras Djir, Tunisia, on 30 March to get a first-hand understanding of the humanitarian situation on the ground. The EU Commissioner for Home Affairs, Cecilia Malmström, also visited Ras Djir and the Choucha camp on 30 March. During a meeting with Tunisian authorities, UN agencies and NGOs, the EU Commissioner's support was sought to advocate for a faster evacuation exercise as well as increased slots for resettlement.
- The High Commissioner and the Director of UNHCR's Middle East and North Africa Bureau are currently on mission in Egypt to meet with the Government, the League of Arab States, UNCT as well as to visit Saloum border.



The Choucha transit camp at the Tunisian-Libyan border. /UNHCR/ A.Duclos

Population Movements

By 30 March, a total of 405,107 persons arrived to Tunisia (205,629), Egypt (162,758), Niger (18,137), Algeria (10,679), Chad (5,104) and Sudan (2,800). There continues to be a steady influx of third country nationals both to Tunisia and Egypt.

Tunisia		Egypt		Niger		Algeria**	Sudan***	Chad
Tunisians	19,677	Egyptians	80,051	Nigeriens	17,039	not available	not available	not available
Libyans*	31,953	Libyans*	35,634	Others	1098			
Others	153,096	Others	47,073					
TOTAL	205,629	TOTAL	162,758	TOTAL	18,137	TOTAL	2,800	TOTAL
						10,679		5,104

Source: IOM in cooperation with national authorities

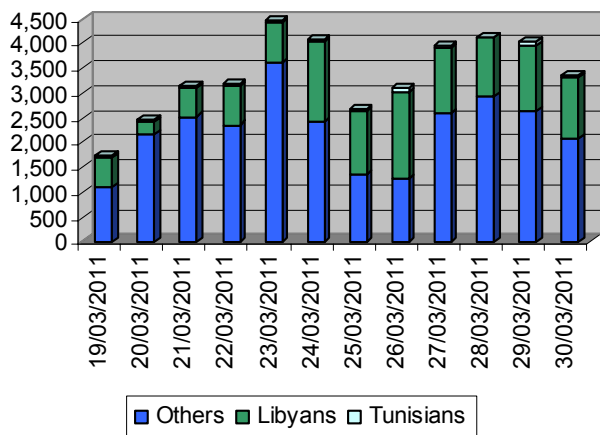
* Includes usual border crossings of commuters, traders etc.

** Source ECHO/*** Source OCHA

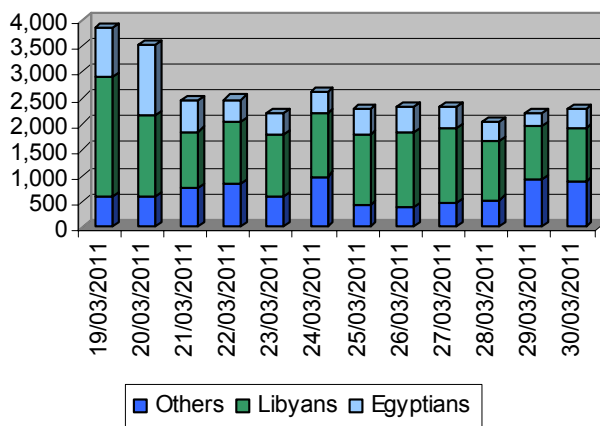
60
YEARS



Population movement into Tunisia



Population movement into Egypt



Country Updates

LIBYA

UNHCR staff in Libya are managing phone calls and emails from refugees and asylum seekers. The majority of these requests seek evacuation from Libya and possible durable solutions. More than 1500 phone calls have been received to date.

UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies attended a meeting at OCHA Cairo to discuss the planned needs assessment mission into Libya. The mission will proceed as and when DSS security assessment is approved, based on security protocols. For the mission to eastern Libya, it is planned to assess the following sectors: protection, WASH, food security, logistics, gender and psycho-social, health, migrant workers. A total of 11 staff are being considered for this mission, among them two from UNHCR.

TUNISIA

Choucha Transit camp/UAE Red Crescent camp:

On 29 March, 7,465 people were residing in Choucha camp, including 1818 from Chad, 1640 from Somalia, 1040 from Sudan, 770 from Mali and 331 from Bangladesh.

In the UAE camp, 1333 people were hosted on 29 March, including 298 from Sudan, 121 from Chad, 204 from Egypt, 158 from Ethiopia and 97 from Bangladesh.

On 30 March, a total of 1,320 people were evacuated from Tunisia, including 745 to Sudan, 233 to Bangladesh, 177 to Ghana and 165 to Egypt.

• Camp management

The Choucha camp restructuring is ongoing. The camp has been divided in two sections, where persons of concern to UNHCR will be relocated according to nationality and family size. The family sector has been completed and some Somali

families have been moved in. The section for singles has been 60% completed.

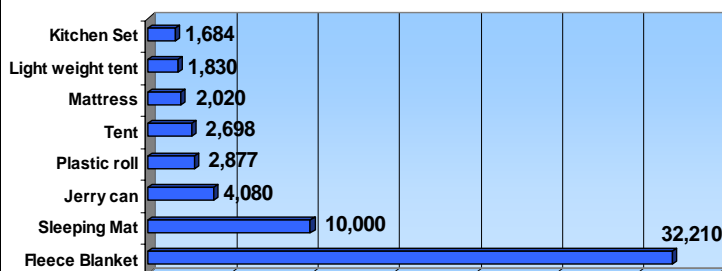
Besides the Choucha and UAE camp, two more camps have been constructed (Al Tawoon camp and IFRC camp), both with a capacity of 1,800 people. Al Tawoon camp serves as a transit centre for mixed flows that cross into Tunisia overnight. The IFRC camp is not yet open.

• Protection

On 30 March, there were 2,420 people of concern to UNHCR in the respective camps. That constitutes 27% of all camp population. The vast majority are from Somalia (1640) and Eritrea (754).

In the night of 30 March, two boats carrying 60 Somalis were reported to have landed at Zarzis seaport and transferred to Choucha camp by the police. According to reports, the boat had departed from Libya en route to Italy. While UNHCR is closely following the situation, there is an assumption that more boats from Libya may arrive in the near future.

Distribution of non-food items by UNHCR in Choucha camp as of 29 March



EGYPT

Egyptian border with Libya (Saloum border crossing):

On 29 March, a total of 1,672 people entered into Egypt through Saloum, including 403 Egyptians, 1,109 Libyans (690 Libyans returned to Libya on the same day) and 162 third country nationals.

There are currently approximately 2,500 in the transit area, including 147 children and 117 women. According to the Nigerian Embassy, there are 700 Nigerien on site.

• Humanitarian assistance

Information leaflets explaining the process of registration and departure with IOM/embassies were distributed to third country nationals. This information campaign will continue in the coming days.

Despite verbal authorization to install three rubble halls at Saloum Port, local authorities are still objecting to the rehabilitation of two buildings to accommodate UNHCR's people of concern and the erection of rubble halls to provide temporary shelter for third country nationals.

• Protection

As of 30 March, 315 people in the transit area are of concern to UNHCR, mainly from Eritrea (102), Ethiopia (69), Sudan (66) and Somalia (60).

Four UNHCR staff continued to conduct Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews; 62 RSD interviews were conducted up to 30 March.

EUROPE

Arrivals to Lampedusa, Linosa and Sicily: The total of new arrivals since mid-January increased to 20,489 people, 18,999 of them are of Tunisian nationality. Currently there are 5,900 people in reception facilities in Lampedusa, all of them Tunisian. The reception conditions continue to be

critical. Tensions, both among the Tunisians as well as between Tunisians and the local population remain high, although the Government's announcement of imminent transfers of all migrants from the island has led to temporary appeasement.

UNHCR has received unconfirmed reports of a missing boat, which left Libya on 22/23 March with 80 people aboard.

Malta: On 28 March, a total of 535 people arrived to Malta from Libya on two separate boats, mainly Somalis (411) and Eritreans (61). Another boat with 250 persons on board has stranded half a mile from Gozo and a rescue operation was conducted.

Resource Mobilization

UNHCR revised its Supplementary Budget for the Libya Situation, which now has a total need of USD 65,700,000. So far, UNHCR has received contributions in the amount of USD 34,583,276; hence it is 53% funded. UNHCR continues to appeal to donors for cash contributions towards the UNHCR supplementary budget.

The Regional Inter-Agency Flash Appeal for the Libyan Crisis, requesting total of USD 160.3 million for March-June, may be revised by the beginning of April. Currently the appeal is 67% funded. IASC CAP Sub-Working Group has concluded that pending a full and formal revision, the Flash Appeal will be updated to reflect current needs on the borders (Tunisia, Egypt, Niger, Algeria and Sudan) resulting from the situation inside Libya.



A Somali child plays in a tent in the Choucha camp on the Libyan-Tunisian border. /UNHCR/ A. Branthwaite

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