

# Libya intercepts boats with over 270 migrants

Author:

Sat, 2019-08-17 21:46

CAIRO, BARCELONA: Libya's coast guard says it has intercepted four boats carrying 278 Europe-bound migrants off the country's Mediterranean coast.

The migrants, including 18 women and two children, were intercepted on Tuesday in separate rescue operations off the coast near the capital, Tripoli, a spokesman said.

Ayoub Gassim said the migrants were given humanitarian and medical aid before being taken to detention centers in Tripoli.

Libya slid into chaos after the 2011 uprising that toppled and later killed ruler Muammar Qaddafi. Armed groups have proliferated, and the country has emerged as a major transit point for migrants fleeing war and poverty in Africa and the Middle East for a better life in Europe.

Meanwhile, a charity that operates a rescue ship carrying 134 migrants off the coast of Italy said on Saturday that it could not guarantee their security, after the boat had spent more than two weeks waiting for a port to disembark in.

The migrants picked up off the coast of Libya, most of whom are African, are waiting to disembark on the southern Italian island of Lampedusa.

Italy's far-right Interior Minister Matteo Salvini has ordered his officials not to let them do so, although on Saturday he made a partial concession, saying he would allow any children to leave the boat.

He added that he had only agreed to this at the insistence of Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte.

The Barcelona-based NGO Open Arms said that 27 minors were to be allowed off the boat.

It also said that the 16 days waiting for a port to disembark in had taken their toll on the migrants, with frequent fights breaking about among them and conditions on board deteriorating.

"It is terrible, the things that are happening are not only physical but psychological. The conditions in which they were staying in Libya and now in the ship, it is just terrible, with 130 people and two toilets," Open Arms' director and founder Oscar Camps told Reuters on Friday.

France, Germany, Romania, Portugal, Spain and Luxembourg have said they will help relocate the migrants, but the reaction from Salvini's interior ministry has been skeptical.

Salvini issued a statement on Saturday reiterating that Open Arms could have taken the migrants to Spain and that it was to blame for their plight. But he added that he was now willing to allow “presumed minors” off the boat.



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## [Sudanese army and civilians seal interim power-sharing deal](#)

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1566036719271612600

Sat, 2019-08-17 10:00

KHARTOUM: Sudan's main opposition coalition and the ruling military council

on Saturday signed a final power-sharing deal that paves the way for a transitional government, and eventually elections, following the overthrow of long-time leader Omar Al-Bashir.

Stability in Sudan, which has been grappling with an economic crisis, is seen as crucial for a volatile region struggling with conflict and insurgencies from the Horn of Africa to Egypt and Libya.

One of Sudan's top generals, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, who is deputy head of the military council, and opposition alliance representative Ahmad al-Rabie had initialed the agreement on Aug. 4 and were the main signatories on Saturday. Those in the room clapped and cheered and an orchestra played a patriotic song.



Also present were African Union and Ethiopian mediators, who helped broker the accord, and representatives from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates, all of which see themselves as influential in Khartoum.

The Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel Al-Jubeir led Saudi Arabia's delegation at the ceremony in Khartoum, Saudi Press Agency reported.

Al-Jubeir was accompanied by the Saudi Minister of State for African affairs Ahmed Abdul Aziz Kattan and the Saudi ambassador to Sudan Ali bin Hassan Jafar.

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**PHOTOS: [Sudanese take to the streets to celebrate transition to civilian rule](#)**  
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Saudi Arabia has and will continue to support everything that guarantees Sudan's security and stability, Al-Jubeir said at the ceremony.

"We look forward to the Sudanese fortifying the partnership agreement and combating foreign interference."

Al-Jubeir also said that Saudi Arabia actively participated in supporting efforts to reach the agreement in Sudan.

The African Union envoy to Sudan Mohamed El-Hassan Lebatt said that Saudi Arabia's role in facilitating the agreement in Sudan was appreciated.



Leaders of Ethiopia, South Sudan and Kenya were also present.

"The coming period will be a test for us, no one will be excluded," said leading opposition figure Sadiq Al-Mahdi, Sudan's last democratically elected premier. "We will open the door to everyone to participate in Sudan's celebration."

The Transitional Military Council (TMC) has ruled Sudan since April, when the military deposed Bashir following months of protests against his rule during which dozens of demonstrators were killed.

The TMC and the main opposition alliance, known as the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC), have been negotiating the power-sharing deal since then, but continued unrest, during which more protesters were killed, delayed an agreement and plunged Sudan further into turmoil.

Dagalo, also known as Hemedti, commands the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, some of whose members have been accused of involvement in killing demonstrators who have repeatedly turned out in huge numbers to press for

political progress.

In a speech, Mohammed Nagy Allassam, a leader within the FFC, emphasized the need for an investigation and justice for those who were killed, particularly during the violent dispersal of a protest site in the capital Khartoum on June 3.

"The martyrs are still with us, they are with the revolutionaries," spectators in the room chanted.

State television showed dozens of people lined up outside the convention centre where the signing ceremony was held, waving flags and flashing peace signs in celebration.

The make-up of a new sovereign council, which will run Sudan during a three-year transitional period leading up to elections, will be announced on Aug. 18.

According to Saturday's agreement, the council will comprise five members each from the two sides plus a civilian agreed by both. It will name Sudan's new premier based on a nomination by the FFC.

The accord also a 300-member legislative assembly to serve during the transitional period, and a cabinet of technocrats.

Bashir is wanted for war crimes in Sudan's Darfur region by the International Criminal Court, and is awaiting trial in Sudan on corruption charges.



