



Nautilus 2008

2008/04/10

Operations Unit/Sea Border Sector

FRONTEX EVALUATION REPORT FER 2008

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1. Background

The EU southern central Mediterranean region is dominated by its sea borders. The EU Member States at southern central European borders, as a result of the region's geographical position, are the ones mainly affected by irregular migration originating and transiting from Africa. The region is both a destination and a transit region for irregular migrants going to the European Union.

According to assessment of the situation concerning illegal migration at the EU external borders and JO "Nautilus 2007" evaluation the main threat at the southern external borders of the European Union comes from the Mediterranean region.

This area is mainly affected by illegal migratory flows arriving from the Horn of Africa and from the Sub-Saharan countries; that is, North Africa as a transit area for the whole continent. At the crossroads of these flows, Italy and Malta may be considered as transit countries as well as a final destination and their specific migratory problems come from Libya and Tunisia.

Migration patterns in Africa have to be seen against the background of violent conflict and political instability. The main flows are driven by wars and the scale of displacement is massive; however, migration flows also comprise more traditional forms of mobility linked to nomad culture and trading, labor migration to both internal and international destinations, and forced migration (trafficking in human beings). In general, mobility patterns could be characterized as so-called 'mixed flows'; that are refugees moving within broader population flows that are also composed of economic and other categories of migrants.

The complex composition of these flows, their interrelation with the level of political and economic instability in the region, makes it difficult to formulate general statements about the demographic composition of the migration flows from Africa. Still, some broad patterns may be found for the region. The Maltese and Italian Islands of Sicily and the Pelagic Archipelago have faced an influx of irregular migrants from the North African coast almost on a daily basis over the past 6 years.

The transportation of illegal migrants is organized by facilitators. For most cases, organized criminal groups use old fishing vessels, fiberglass boats, as well as a variety of maritime transportation and safe houses in Libya and Tunisia. Taking into account analysis of the seaborne illegal migration incidents in several geographical areas it has been established that the smuggling of illegal migrants along all the African routes is a lucrative business for the criminal network; however there are individuals of diverse background that deal in the smuggling business in the region.

2. Achievement of the objectives

2.1 General Objective

Coordination - to coordinate risk analyses based operational cooperation between Members States in the field of management of external borders through organizing a synchronization of surface and air patrolling efforts enabling the detection and interception of targets and identification of facilitators organizing illegal immigration via sea, by the use of the Member States' assets and interrogation experts.

Was achieved – as the operation was led by the Joint Coordination Board (JCB) included National Officials (NO) from the Member States that provided air or maritime assets as well as the Frontex Coordinator. The NO's were coordinating the activities of their units with the Head of International Coordination Centre Malta. The coordination of cooperation between participating EU Member States were working well because the preparation and implementation of the patrolling schedule was made according to the operative needs and agreed between National Officials of each participating country in the Joint Coordination Board meetings every day. Incidents were discussed and all information was shared between National Officials.

2.2 Specific Objectives

Border control – to carry out an exhaustive border control operation to control migrants emanating from North African countries in the defined operational areas, attempts should be made to convince the migrants on board migrant boats to alter their course back to the point/coast of origin;

Not achieved – due to a combination of the current legal framework, the lack of surface resources, the distance of the selected operational areas from the points of departure and the lack of any cooperation with relevant third countries resulted in a situation where the return of migrants to the points of departure was not possible. Such returns were precluded both by the operational impossibility of diverting such small and vulnerable crafts over extended distances as well as the legal and humanitarian issues of what level of coercion could reasonably be used to ensure that the craft were diverted.

Identification of facilitators - to identify facilitators that are transporting migrants from Africa to Europe;

Was partly achieved – as the intelligence gathered provided comprehensive information regarding the facilitation networks that were identified, however, this aim cannot be considered as completely achieved as no follow-up action to confirm this information from alternate sources was undertaken.

Promotion of co-operation between experts - to foster relationships between guest officers of the different participating Member States;

Was achieved – as the by Frontex coordinated activities envisaged the cooperation between the Member States, in particular among the deployed guest officers exchanging the know-how, best practises and contact details and learning about the national procedures from each other.

Progress in information exchange - to improve the coordination and exchange of information between the pertinent authorities of the Member States and Frontex;

Was partly achieved – as the JO provided a useful platform to enhance the operational cooperation between EU Member States, however, not been maintained subsequent to the completion of the JO.

Development of analytical activities - to enhance analytical activities and thereby improve the efficiency of the joint operation;

Was achieved.

Information management - to evaluate, set up and manage information flows by collecting, collating and disseminating intelligence as required and to use the gathered information for improving the effectiveness of the operation by sharing the information among all the active participants involved;

Was achieved.

Operative support - to reinforce the operative systems that the participating Member States normally use in their own sea borders to fight against illegal migration for example by patrolling outside normal patrolling areas closer to the coasts of third countries;

Was partly achieved – the participating Member States’ deployed assets with the autonomy to survey a wide area also outside the defined operational area.

Increase of cooperation - to increase cooperation between Member States in order to increase the quality of border control at the southern external maritime borders of the EU;

Achievement: **achieved.**

Common border management policy - to support the development of a common policy on the management of external sea borders;

Was partly achieved – as it is questionable to what extent the JO supported the development of a common policy on the management of external maritime borders. On the contrary, the course of the JO highlighted the significant differences between the operational approach of various Member States and their interpretation of international legal instruments. It also provided a distant insight into the different political approaches of the various Member States in regard to the wider issues concerning migration as well as the specifics of their relations with third countries.

3. Results/outcome

Malta have faced an increasing influx of irregular migrants from the North African coast over the past 4 years. One viable way of suppressing the flow of migrants is by organizing combined maritime operations in order to deter migrant traffickers, facilitators as well as potential migrants from organizing and undergoing risky Mediterranean crossings.

4. Overall budget used

The direct financial contribution from Frontex was estimated at 7 million Euros whereas the payment has been amounted to 6,2 million Euros.

5. Link to or usefulness for other JO or other Frontex activities

During the operation, there was a pilot project conducted by the LIMES in cooperation with Frontex aiming to provide intelligence to ICC, from a series of satellite radar images. Their efforts were channelled to detect small boats, less than 8 meters and the most common means of transport of illegal migrants from the Libyan coasts towards Europe.

It turned out, during the trials that the technology employed was at that moment not yet developed to detect boats less than 50 m, and a follow up would be considered when the hardware and software capabilities are in place, enabling to detect any floating object in vast areas like the operational areas established.

6. Added value of the JO

Awareness – to achieve the situational awareness of the EU external borders;

Despite the limited amount of deployed assets in conjunction with lack of intelligence service a satisfactory awareness level was achieved. The fact that the operational areas were situated 100 Nm south of Maltese coast contributed also to a scattered distribution of forces.

Response – to establish synchronization and efficient utilization of available resources;

The utilization of the available resources was soundly performed by the JCB team. Clear schedules and routines were followed in order to anticipate or to address any incident.

Interoperability – to ensure development and integration of required tools and platforms;

The EPN structure served as a platform for the operation, and Frontex tried extensively to facilitate the cooperation of all the entities involved.

Performance – to enhance the quality and quantity of border control;

Narrow as much is possible the number of illegal entries, to coordinate the execution of efficient blue border surveillance and develop a platform for sharing intelligence valuable for staff and assets deployed.

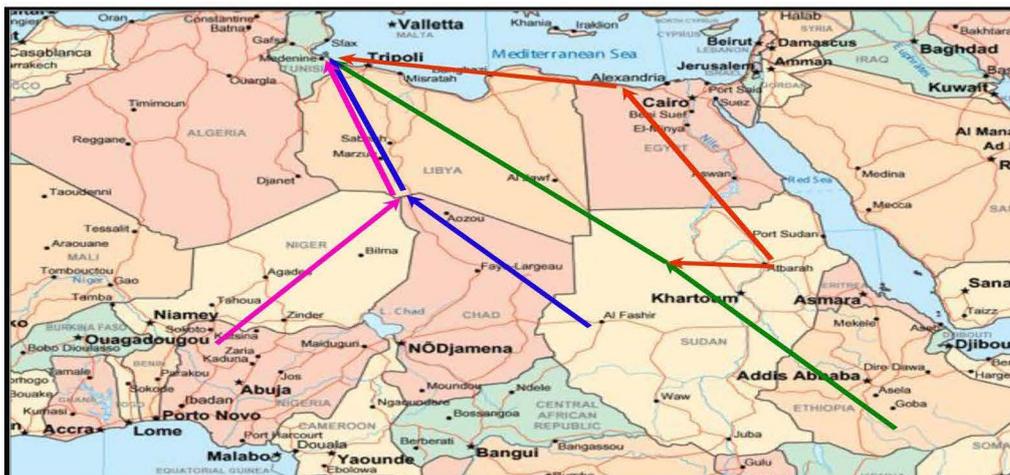
1. Brief general description of the JO

The Maltese and Italian Islands have faced an influx of irregular migrants from the North African coast almost on a daily basis for many years. The influx of such migration is so intense that this phenomenon is exerting a considerable strain on Government resources. The Joint Operation (JO) Nautilus 2008 was implemented based on Frontex risk analyses. Maltese Government supported the idea to arrange JO “Nautilus 2008” and the decision to arrange the operation was made in January 2008. Operation “Nautilus 2008” was planned to be arranged between 15th April and 15th October 2008. Due to not finally clarified disembarkation criteria’s within the participating Member States until beginning of the operation, Frontex decided to postpone the operation. An agreement between the participating Member States regarding disembarkation criteria’s was found within from the Maltese requested further preoperational meeting on the 7 May 2008. Based on the agreed disembarkation provisions the JO started on the 17 May until the 15 October 2008. The mission of this JO was to protect maritime borders of the European Union and control international waters with the support of participating Member States.

1.1 Land routes in Africa

Among the land routes in Africa, the following main itineraries could be identified from information gathered by the Frontex experts during the interviews conducted during JO Nautilus 2007:

- The **East Africa Route**, which leads from East Africa via Sudan, Chad and Libya to the Mediterranean Sea;
- The **West Africa Route**, which leads from the West African countries through the Niger and/or Chad and Libya to the Mediterranean Sea. An alternative route from the West African countries is through Mali, southern Algeria, Libya and to the shores of the Mediterranean;
- The **Red Sea Route**, via the Red Sea and the Suez Canal to Italy and Malta, and/or Greece, or Cyprus.



2. Coordination structure used during the JO

Implementation of JO Nautilus 2008 took place between 17 May and 15 October 2008 within the first three days only supported by German and Maltese assets. On the 21 May 2008 assets from other involved Member States began their activities as well the experts began to interviewing the migrants.

The ICC was located in the premises of Armed Forces of Malta (AFM) in Luqa. The ICC was manned by duty officers on 24/7– base for preparing and executing the joint operation. ICC has to report to the Joint Coordinating Board (JCB) of all matters related to “Nautilus 2008”.

The Joint Coordination Board (JCB) was running the operation. The Head of ICC was a Maltese AFM officer, designated by Maltese authorities. The members of the JCB included National Officials (NO) from each Member State that provided air or maritime assets as well as Frontex Coordinator. The NO’s were coordinating the activities of their units with the Head of ICC. NO’s were authorized to take decisions concerning the assets of their own Member State. The Daily JCB meetings were arranged in ICC Malta. ICC was responsible for planning and coordination of patrolling within the operational areas.

3. Operational methods

3.1 Operational approach

During the operation it was aimed to deploy assets within the operational area as much as possible to reach higher patrolling coverage. This was a real challenge for the participating assets due to weather limitations, staff working rules and other national commitments of the hosting Member States. With the operational areas stretched over more than 4000 square NM, with at least 8-10 hours to reach the E and W and just a couple of hours the L area, the main focus was to detect as many targets as possible inside the Operational Areas. All the surveillance activities employing aerial assets and the response on the scene of the various types of vessels, corroborated with the experts efforts in gathering intelligence and detect facilitators from the fresh arrivals, underline the fact that there were enough means and experts to support the Joint Operation for more than 5 months.

Common “Rules of Engagement” have been agreed with the participants during the planning process, as a common operational procedure, therefore during the implementation phase there was no need to update the existing rules. However in almost all cases the Italian means declared a Search and Rescue event, whilst the Maltese AFM tried to render any kind of assistance towards to the targets detected.

The International Coordination Centre established in Malta, having been enhanced by the RCC Malta with information and reports and the Operation Staff of the AFM is considered a step forward in the Development of EPN Concept. However, it’s still not sufficient enough to be considered as a major improvement. However, if the ICC would be upgraded to a National Coordination Centre, showing an increased cooperation at the national level, than the whole activity would be enhanced and the establishment of the NCC would be made possible in the future.

As to enhancing the information flows among the different authorities competent for combating illegal migration at the national and European level it’s been observed that the quality of the exchanged reports was improved. All the collected data from the interviews as

well other sources was used to updating and adapting the planning and patrolling schedules during the implementation.

A good example is the efforts made to foster the cooperation among the Italian various entities, especially those like Italian Coast Guard and Guardia the Finanzia and Italian Navy. There is still room to improvement in this regard, but as long as these authorities are compelled to work together in a Frontex framework, their own domestic misunderstandings can be overcome and a seamless cooperation among them may be witnessed.

3.2 Border surveillance

The surveillance has been carried out by the personnel deployed with maritime and aerial assets and by the existing capabilities on the shore. Due to the geographical exposure, the fact that the hosting Member State is on the itinerary of the boats, the size of the fiber glass or dinghies used to cross the Mediterranean, decreased the number of detected contacts of interests. There were also reports from third parties, like fishing vessels, migrants on board of the crafts with satellite phones, migrants on detention center in Malta and even from other agencies as UNHCR.

The “border surveillance” was in fact a situational awareness, due to the fact that in the south of the operational areas were situated far beyond the territorial waters of the hosting Member State, and it was obtained with the equipments installed on board of maritime or aerial assets and constantly watching the radio environment.

It was tried, during these patrols and sorties, to pre-empt the illegal activities, to give more response time to prepare the boarding, address the incident or perform diversions. Unfortunately there were no diversions made and boarding happened only when the lives of the irregular migrants were in danger and they had to be rescued.

The Command and Control of maritime and air assets participating in the operation remained under the authority of National Commands through the National Officials (NO). The tactical command of maritime and air assets remained under the authority of the Specific Commander of each asset.

4. PERFORMANCE OF THE HOSTING MEMBER STATES

4.1 Functioning of the International Coordination Centre (ICC)

The ICC was manned 24/7 by duty officers who carried out their duties on a roster basis. There has been a direct communication between the means and ICC. In parallel due to national legislations the Italian assets were obliged to report to their National Headquarters as well.

4.2 Functioning of the ICC-Coordinator

The Maltese AFM designated one senior officer who was acting as the heads of the ICC and responsible for the coordination of the activities. The ICC Coordinators chaired the daily meeting of the Joint Coordinating Board.

4.3 Intelligence officers

The appointment of an IO enabling and facilitating the information gathering was crucial when implementing Frontex coordinated activities. As agreed during the planning process, the Maltese Police appointed an experienced IO who has been in charge for the previous editions too.

The IO in Malta took his role seriously and his presence throughout the implementation ensured coherent information flows into/out of the ICC. The overall work was anyway hampered by the missing link and counterpart in Lampedusa, at the beginning of the operation, until the Italian authorities considered fixing the issue.

Despite of several requests to the Italian Ministry of Interior the operation was not supported in Lampedusa in terms of a deployment of an IO. This task was fulfilled in the majority by the TASK FORCE composed of members of the Italian Polizia di Stato and/or by the parallel ongoing JAU project. This happened at least for the needed statistics/reports.

4.5 Logistic arrangements

The logistic arrangement for deployed guest officers and crew members, related to accommodation and transportation as well as regarding the deployment of means from other Member States worked satisfactory.

4.6 Maltese resources

During the planning process the Maltese authorities represented by the Armed Forces of Malta and the Police committed themselves to establish the requested national resources enabling an effective implementation of the operational activities.

The location of the ICC (the same as in Nautilus 2007), the appointment of ICC Coordinator's and an IO with the necessary coordination skills ensuring the information gathering, the deployment of means were confirmed by the Maltese authorities during the planning meeting.

4.7 National staff

The Maltese Officers of the Armed Forces and the Police, who participated in the activities, were informed in general about the operation. This might be caused in the structure of the operational plan as well as this was a large document.

The national staff tried to give all the needed support at least in logistic matters to the participating officers of Member States. As all Maltese speak English and Italian even the language barrier with the Italian participants does not exist, however there was a good collaboration among officers from hosting and participating Member States.

5. PERFORMANCE OF DEPLOYED RESOURCES

5.1 National Official (NO)

The NOs were appointed by the Member States which deployed their aerial means to an operation. The NOs were deployed in the ICC and were responsible for coordinating the actions of their respective national means with the ICC Coordinator during the joint

operations according to their national legislation. In case of Luxembourg the task of the IO was delegated to the ICC Coordinator.

5.2 Guest Officers

The guest officers from the participating Member States were experts in debriefing and identification. The guest officers showed an impressive conduct and attitude performing their tasks in a proper way and border guards from different Member States worked closely together. The deployed guest officers had in average a good level of expertise and were experienced.

The language skills, apart of English (Arabic, French, different African slangs and Italian etc) of some of the guest officers have increased the quality of the information.

Despite of the possible logistic problems for the participating Member States, it would be desirable to have the participation of the same staff, in the same sea operation every year or to vary them as less as possible. The participating staff would become more adapted to the special features of the operation increasing the level of performance every year.

The exchange of knowledge and experiences among the officers from different Member States as well as the exchange of contact details has been positive for the hosting and participating Member States.

5.3 Aerial and maritime means

The deployed aerial and maritime assets were carrying out the foreseen tasks in line with the operational plan, apart of the rules of engagement.

When in ICC received information about departures from various sources the patrolling schedule was adapted to the new circumstances.

The areas were situated partly out of the Maltese SAR and are usually not regularly patrolled by Maltese and Italian assets.

6. FRONTEX COORDINATION

6.1 Performance

When assessing the Frontex role as a Community coordinator it has to be kept in mind that whatever Frontex does in regard to the coordination of Member States actions, in all the stages Frontex relies on activities and the commitment of the Member States, in particular the hosting Member States.

For the JO Nautilus 2008, the planning activities were performed together with Italy and Malta. The operational Plan related to the organizational structure was agreed upon even though at a very last moment.

6.2 Monitoring role – Frontex Coordinator (FC)

A Frontex Coordinator (FC) was deployed to the ICC in Malta during the joint operation acting as the head of the Frontex delegation during the joint operation, to monitoring the joint

operation and fostering the cooperation and coordination among the hosting and participating Member States.

The task was performed by four Frontex staff members during the operation, replacing each other on a monthly basis.

The FC was located in the ICC, but visited the Detention Centers in Safi, Lister and Lampedusa (Italy), during the operational period supporting the performance, especially of the guest officers. No major obstacles were expressed to the FC and other cases were resolved together with the hosting Member States authorities.

6.3 Analyst Supporting Operation (ASO)

The ASO visited the guest officers deployed in Malta and Lampedusa on a monthly basis. When visiting the ICC the ASO participated actively in the morning briefing and gave a vivid account of the situation in the Central Mediterranean area.

These visits enabled the ASO to assess the guest officers' knowledge as well as their progress in the techniques in debriefing

It may be safely said that the presence of an ASO in the ICC and the support of the FC was beneficial to conduct the operation. It is pertinent to point out that during the JO the ASO could not rely on the assistance of the FISO as he was not available in this theatre of operation.

7. Presentation of operational results

Throughout the operation a total number of 334 migrant boats were intercepted. 4991 illegal migrants were detected inside operational areas whereas 9857 illegal migrants outside operational areas. The figures outside of the operational area include early detections south of the operational area (due to the capability of several aerial assets to cover a wider area outside the predefined search sectors) and even detections of migrant boats within the transfer of means towards to the operational area and visa versa. The total number of intercepted, landed and rescued migrants at Malta/Gozo/Lampedusa/ Isola di Linosa was 18419. It has to be taken into account that these numbers include the statistics of the migrants who were delivered to the Italian Authorities/Sicily as well via European Patrol Network Report.

7.1 Year 2008

All the Somalis arriving in Malta and Lampedusa are generally young (20 – 25) and male, although some young females and older males have been arriving. Many of the migrants claimed to have had a Somali passport at some time, possibly indicating that they left their home country a long while ago maybe to work in neighbouring countries or the U.A.E. There have been no accounts that this is the case but telephone numbers for Saudi Arabia and other U.A.E countries have been found in their possessions.

Most of the Somalis in Malta arrive unintentionally due to bad weather, poor navigation, or as a result of being rescued at sea. Their primary intention was to arrive in Lampedusa, Italy, because there they are detained for a shorter period of time. From Italy it is easier for them to travel on to the Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom where there are large communities of Somali nationals. However, there was intelligence that a high number of Somalis are instructed by friends and relatives to deliberately target Malta because they know that the

United States of America have agreements with Malta to offer Green Card status to a number of Somalis every year.

The intelligence gathered from debriefs indicate that the origin of one particular organised facilitation network is based in Khartoum, Sudan. There is no evidence to suggest that there are substantial organised criminal facilitation networks operating from Khartoum to Somalia. Arrival in Khartoum is often via circuitous routes via Eritrea, Djibouti, and Ethiopia using a variety of transportation and small amounts of money.

8. Analysis of information and intelligence

8.1 African Migration Patterns

Thousands of Africans try to make their journey to Europe each year, risking their life by being exposed to facilitators, deserts, sea crossings and the possibility of being sent home, all to seek out a better life. Migration patterns in Africa should be seen in the light of violent conflict and political instability; and also comprise more traditional forms of mobility linked to nomad culture and trading, labour migration to both internal and international destinations and forced migration (trafficking in human beings).

The complex composition of these flows, their interrelation with the level of political and economic instability in the region, makes it difficult to formulate general statements about the demographic composition of the migration flows from Africa. Still, some patterns may be found for the region.

Migrants from Africa are mostly young people, trying to escape from poverty; repressive political environments; and, in some cases, compulsory military service in their home country; to seek work abroad and to send back their earnings to contribute to the livelihood of their families.

8.2 The reasons for attempting to reach the EU

Most of the migrants interviewed during the JO (especially those from Nigeria, Ghana and Asia) claimed they attempted to reach Europe because of 'socio-economic' reasons. There were also some other cases of migrants (especially among from Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia) adducing 'civil and ethnic conflict' and 'political' reasons as well. Some migrants stated they had been persecuted for ethnic or religious differences or wanted to get out of family feuds.

Some spent large periods of time in other African countries such as Sudan, Kenya, Uganda and Libya before deciding to travel further. Their initial intention had been simply to travel to a neighbouring country (to their own) to find a better life with prospects of work, education and being able to raise a family.

Many migrants, in particularly from countries of former European colonies were deliberately targeting certain countries due to a common language (mainly English or French), family or friends or based on promises or rumours either on available work or residence documents. Many of the illegal migrants interviewed were quite prepared to say that they would attempt to travel to the UK or the wish to find a job in the EU, after entering Italian mainland. Of the 789 migrants interviewed, 38% declared to have relatives in Europe, in particular France, Greece, Italy, United Kingdom Sweden, Germany, Switzerland and Spain.

8.3 Push and Pull factors

8.3.1 Horn of Africa Countries

- **Sudan** - The Sudanese nationals interviewed during the operational phase fall within both categories of refugees and economic migrants. Many of those interviewed claimed to be fleeing the crisis in Darfur, Western Sudan, to escape a conflict which has resulted in the killing of thousands of people while hundreds of thousands have fled their homes to seek protection elsewhere, either within Sudan or outside the country. Sudan has always been known as a triple divide: that is, between Muslims and Christians, Arabs and Africans, nomads and farmers, which become a source of conflict in the region.
- Therefore, Sub-Saharan migrants are recommended by facilitators to declare themselves Sudanese from Darfur in order to be granted political asylum.
- **Eritrea and Ethiopia** - The most common reason for leaving Eritrea cited by Eritrean nationals, particularly by the men, was the practice of forced military service and compulsory enrolment in the army. National service is compulsory for all men and women aged between 18 and 40 and the right to conscientious objection is not recognized by the authorities.
Others mentioned particular problems arising from mixed marriages between an Eritrean and an Ethiopian, causing problems for the couple themselves or their children. In addition the desire to improve their economic situation was also mentioned by many.
- **Somalia** - Currently a quarter of Somalis are thought to live outside of their country of origin. The gradual collapse of the Somali state throughout the nineties until 2004 created a situation of intense instability and insecurity as well as a fall in the standard of living. This led to large numbers of the population seeking refuge in various countries around the EU. Among the Somali Diaspora, a transnational lifestyle has been established as families make collective decisions on who lives where and who provides for whom.

8.4 Sub Saharan Countries

To counteract the effects of the air embargo and the subsequent international isolation, Libya facilitated the entry conditions by land. The Libyan government started to particularly welcome sub-Saharan Africans to work in Libya consolidating this way the trans-Saharan migration routes and networks. One of the major pull factors of Libya today is the geographical position that works as an access point to Europe.

8.5 Main nationalities

The nationalities of the migrants were mixed and included persons from various countries across North Africa and Asia. Besides some women and children arrived the majority were males, poorly educated, between the ages of 18 and 30. There were some exceptions who claimed to have university degrees and who did indeed appear well educated.

The arrival of a high number of Somali illegal migrants in Lampedusa (2,387) suggests that organized criminal networks are specifically targeting this nationality. The presence of Somali among the illegal migrants arriving in Malta (1,184) is also remarkable.

There are two possible interpretations regarding the arrival of Somalis in Malta. On one hand, intelligence sources suggest that a high number of Somalis are instructed by friends and relatives to deliberately target Malta because of the possibility of resettlement in the United

States of America. The facilitators are also 'advertising' this pull factor. In this way if a migrant wants to reach the USA, he prefers to arrive in Malta instead of Italy. On the other hand, a considerable number of Somalis arrive in Malta unintentionally due to bad weather conditions or poor navigation capability, whereas their real intention was to reach Lampedusa, Italy.

The reasons to prefer Lampedusa is likely the fact that the migrants are detained for a shorter period of time in Italy and from Italy it is easier to travel on to other destinations in North Europe, where large communities of Somali nationals are.

8.6 Routes to Italy

The findings from the interviews show that all the migrants detected used Libya as the last departure point before arriving in Lampedusa; this is because it is regarded as the quickest, cheapest and safest route to Europe and possible to bribe the police (if arrested) as corruption is widespread.

For a better perception of the routes, it is essential to separate the migrants into two groups: those from the region of the Horn of Africa and those from sub-Saharan countries:

- the Nigerian and Ghanaian were generally less forthcoming about what had happened to them and some gave unbelievable stories regarding their journeys. Some mentioned having walked the entire way from Nigeria to Tripoli and some claimed to have sailed from a south Nigerian port all the way round the west coast of Africa, through the Straits of Gibraltar to Lampedusa. Of those that did speak, Burkina, Niger, Algeria and Chad were all mentioned prior to entry into Libya and more specifically Bawku (Ghana), Niamey, Zinder, Agadez, Dirkou (Niger) and Kano, Sokoto (Nigeria) as nexus points. Once in Libya the travel was either via Ghat and Awbari to Sabha or Al Qatrun to Sabha then Hun and then Tripoli.
- the illegal migrants from Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea that were often of a higher academic level and seemed prepared to speak more freely and, therefore, a much more in depth view was obtained of their journey.

8.7 Sudan and Horn of Africa routes

The majority of people coming from Sudan and the Horn of Africa arrive in Al Kufrah, in the southeastern corner of Libya. Al Kufrah provides the main point of entry for commercial traders as well as for irregular arrivals of refugees and migrants. Most people do not plan to stay in Al Kufrah beyond a few days, but rather use it as a transit point in route to other cities in Libya.

This period is usually necessary to find a smuggler in order to take the traveller out of Al Kufrah to the next destination. Due to the lack of documentation, nationals of Sudan and the Horn of Africa usually fear travelling on public transports and, as such, travel within Libya is facilitated by a smuggler for a fee.

8.8 Asian routes

Migrants from China, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh have started migrated to the Maghreb via Saharan routes. They enter north Africa through Egypt to Libya and Tunisia, from where they cross to Italy and Malta.

The information provided by the Asian migrants interviewed was not very useful to draw the routes they followed to arrive to Libya. Some Indians are said to fly to Tripoli transiting

Dubai. No Indians or Pakistanis were seen by other migrants crossing the Sahara desert, but Bangladeshis were.

Some migrants indicated two main routes from Pakistan:

- Pakistan - Afghanistan - Iraq - Jordan - Egypt - Libya
- Pakistan - Afghanistan - Iran - Turkey – Libya

Additional intelligence about this route should be carried out to verify the truth of these statements, also because no other African migrant interviewed claimed that other migrants joined their boats during the sea crossing.

8.9 Price

The payments for the sea crossing varied from 300 USD to 1,500 USD, but the price usually reach 2,000/2,500 USD including handouts and transit charges. Moreover some migrants claimed to have paid some money to get accommodation, food and water in the safe houses. At the beginning of summer the fare seemed to be on the rise. This could depend on the increase of people wished to leave Libya to reach Europe during the summer season, when the weather conditions are better, so that prices rise in line with the law of supply and demand.

The presence of several Frontex coordinated assets at sea during the JO gives the migrants a sense of safe passage. In other terms, the migrants have more chance to be rescued and they have to pay more for this sort of ‘facility’

9. Detected vulnerabilities of Member States’ border security

The southern central Mediterranean region is dominated by its external sea borders. As a result of the region’s geographical position, Malta and Italy may be considered as transit countries as well as a final destination. Their specific migratory problems are related to Libya and Tunisia, countries which are mainly affected by illegal migratory flows arriving from the Horn of Africa and Sub-Saharan countries, that is, North Africa as a transit area for the whole continent.

Lampedusa is a small island situated north of Tripoli. During the last few years the island has increasingly become synonymous of being the gateway to Europe for illegal migrants from Africa.

The problem is, that once boats transporting these people arrive in international waters, Italy is morally bound to launch search and rescue missions in order to prevent thousands of people perishing at sea every year and once rescued the migrants become the responsibility of the rescuing nation. Many migrants claim to come from countries where safe return is not possible (due to the situation in their home country) and therefore many use Italy as a launch pad for traveling to other European countries where they intend to join family and/or find work and settlement.

10. Strengths and weaknesses of the overall JO

10.1 Strengths

- The network of contact points from each participating Member States worked out well;

- Press rules were followed, especially dutifully by Armed Forces of Malta and French Navy;
- The system of information flows established by Frontex proved to be functioning;
- High level in the activities performed by assets of the participating Member States;
- Readiness and cooperation of the participating Member States in planning and performing the joint activities of the assets deployed.

10.2 Weaknesses

Lack of participation of Libya

- Before the operation started Frontex tried to invite Libya to participate by sending an invitation letter. There was no replay. In two different official letters Libya was encouraged to send representatives to the planning meeting in Warsaw and nominate Libyan liaison officers in ICC Malta. Frontex also asked Libya to appoint a point of contact in case there is a need to contact Libya during the operation.
- Due to the approach of the Maltese and in their view, not sufficiently implemented by other participants, to pressure the Libyan authorities to react in course of an incident, Libya was contacted a few times in order to accept the obligation incurred by the international legislation.
- However, the efficiency of this method needs further consideration, due to the fact of the existing behavior of Libya towards the European efforts to protect the southern maritime borders.
- The aim was to raise the awareness of the Libyan authorities in charge with migration and not only the SAR authorities operating in third countries but engaging as well the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, etc. and their ambassadors or diplomatic liaison staff in both European countries and third countries.

Similarly like with Libya, before the start of the operation Frontex tried to invite Tunisia to participate by sending an invitation letter. In two different official letters Tunisia was encouraged to send representatives to the planning meeting in Warsaw. Frontex invited also Tunisia to participate into Nautilus 2008 operation by sending liaison officers to operational centers. Tunisia didn't reply to the invitation.

Some temporary difficulties in establishing contact by e-mail or over the phone with Italian colleagues have been occurred.

The questionnaire designed for the debriefing teams was inefficiently constructed as it encouraged "pro forma" answers and did not encourage continuity of the migrants account. Furthermore it seems that interviewing officers are under the wrong impression that this form is to be treated as a multiple choice questionnaire.

The quality of some of the information received thanks to the system of information flows established by Frontex proved to be poor, especially in the case of information gathered by the deployed experts during the interviews and in the case of the incident reports.

Regarding the exchange of information between the hosting Member States, no formal method of ensuring that all participants had the same intelligence picture was implemented;

In Malta, several interviews were conducted simultaneously in the same room as well as in the open air. This obviously prepares individuals for forthcoming questions and answers, prevents confidentiality and left interviewees thinking that they could not exchange information without being overheard.

In Lampedusa, the interviewing rooms were not always conducive to ensure a thorough debrief was carried out; often makeshift accommodation was arranged due to an oversight of other organizations using the interviewing facilities. The lack of suitable interview accommodation hampered the collection of information.

The debriefing teams frequently accompanied the local officers to the detention areas and assisted in the selection of potential interviewees. However the selection was restricted by the availability of interpreters or English /Arabic speakers. It was possible to overcome this problem with the assistance of “friendly” detainees who were willing to interpret but it is difficult to judge whether their translation was accurate or they were not influencing the interviewee; on several occasions it was noted that the interpreter was answering the questions before the immigrant had the chance to respond;

The identification of the migrants is based exclusively on their “number ticket” which doesn’t include any photo of the holder, thus making possible the swapping of these documents between them;

Good intelligence was compromised once new arrivals first ‘socialize’ especially amongst large groups of long term detainees at the holding areas;

The hosting Member State should warn Frontex on important changes in relevant legislation, agreements and working arrangements with third countries, during the implementation of Frontex coordinated operational activities;

11. Lessons learned

11.1 Generally

- The aim was to raise the awareness of the Libyan authorities in charge with migration and not only the SAR authorities operating in third countries but engaging as well the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, etc and their ambassadors or diplomatic liaison staff in both European countries and third countries;
- Without Libya’s participation in the next JO Nautilus, the aims aspired can not be entirely achieved;
- Malta and Italy are morally bound to launch search and rescue missions in international waters; once rescued the migrants become the responsibility of the rescuing nation;
- The presence of several assets at sea due to the Frontex coordinated JO in progress gave the migrants a sense of safe passage, the rescuing nation become responsible for the migrants saved. In other words, the migrants had more possibilities to be rescued and they had to pay more for this ‘added value’;
- Repatriation of failed asylum seekers who entered Malta illegally and undocumented remains one of the main problems. The vast majority of these migrants claim to be

nationals of countries that have no local consular representation and therefore they are highly unlikely to be issued with a laissez-passer;

- There seems to be a growing antipathy towards Frontex in the hosting Member States, due to the adverse press campaign following the number of arrivals during the JO

11.2 Conclusions

- Implementation of the operation depended on the capabilities of the assets involved and thus by the weather conditions. Deployment of the assets was planned accordingly based on the operational needs;
- Not all the National Officials had the necessary powers to coordinate actions of their national assets and to support the ICC personnel in all aspects;
- The FISO's activity and involvement was minimal in terms of supporting the information exchange and bridge the entities in the intelligence field;
- The objective of intercepting the contacts of interests in the operational areas as well having the awareness of and extended areas around the operational areas, using the wide detection capabilities of the aerial means and surveillance equipments on board of the ship can be considered satisfactory. It was affected by the behaviour of the tactical commander of the assets, performing duties according to their understanding of internal and international legal framework;
- There was a lack of maritime means in the operation in terms of offshore capabilities and duration. There were breaks in patrolling especially inside Whisky area during the operational areas. The four CPVs of Guardia di Finanza (GdF) and Coast Guard had limited capabilities due to various constraints to stay longer periods on the sea. They were inside the operational area only twelve hours at a time. Because of the lack of maritime means in Echo and Whisky areas some migrant boats were intercepted in the vicinity of Lampedusa and Malta;
- Within the time frame of the operation the satellite radar images provided by Telespazio in the framework of LIMES project were used with minimal usefulness due to ongoing improvements and researches and up dating both the hardware and software. The limitations were clearly identified.

11.3 Recommendations

- Reconsidering the time-frame of implementing the operation. The monitoring of this region throughout the year is imperative due to the proximity of the North African coast and the permanent risk of flows of sea-born illegal immigrants to the EU;
- Operational areas should be reconsidered in order to increase participation and effectiveness and be moved either closer to EU shores or closer to Third countries shores;
- The active participation of the actual third countries is crucial. Dialogues with Libya and Tunisia should be carried out by Frontex and hosting Member States to achieve a better cooperation;
- The training for the experts before the operation is strongly recommended;

- Frontex should continue the development of FJST concept with selection and training of Member States officers, and also include officers from third countries, enabling a higher quality of experts/guest officers and easier profiling of actual needs. These officers should further be included in preparation courses focused on assessing, collecting and evaluating intelligence data on international laws and procedures applicable to the refugees matter;
- The mixed teams of interviewing experts were working quite well, but a change in the Guidelines for Interviews is desirable. These interviews must delve deeply into routes of illegal immigration, main points of contact with facilitators, possible links to European groups or communities; links to criminal networks operating in the EU;
- The ASO together with the FISO and IO should assist the experts deployed in the field during the JO according to the level of involvement required. The sharing of information that the host Member State might have regarding this region would be of great importance to formulate a more indicative picture of the situation;
- Frontex should continue the development of templates for information gathering ensuring the availability of needed information and avoiding overlaps in the reporting system;
- It is also essential to highlight the importance of the definition of the indicators prior to the operational phase and of the constant reporting during the implementation of the operational phase; In order to enhance the effectiveness of the operation, it is recommended to distribute the intelligence generated to the competent authorities of the hosting Member States at a working level;
- It is recommended that Frontex develops an operational handbook consisting of relevant data regarding different nationalities involved in illegal migration and profiles, modus operandi, boats names, shipping-companies. This Handbook is considered an essential tool for the improvement of knowledge on the nationalities in focus.
- Improvements should be made regarding a dedicated interview facilities at each site. Minimal requirements at such a facility should be ideally to include a minimum of two separate interviewing rooms, with dedicated pre-loaded operational laptops with printers;
- It is also recommended to include a personal photo of the migrant in the identification card distributed in order to identify the detainees; this would avoid the switching of the “ticket number” between illegal immigrants;
- The hosting Member States should present to Frontex their organization structure and practical implementation how immigration issues are processed, in particular during the implementation of Frontex coordinated operational activities;
- The hosting and participating Member States should commit themselves to a flexible operational deployment required by the operational developments during the implementation phase of the JO;
- Enhanced cooperation with other Agencies. Frontex should work more closely with other Agencies and the hosting Member States to ensure a sufficient implementation, including other Agencies such as Europol and Interpol into the operational activities, above all concerning to further investigation based on the information gathered in the interviews;

- The information gathered by the GO and IO is overall very good but kept in Frontex. Frontex has to look for the way to make this information operationally valuable;
- Regular meetings shall be maintained during the implementation phase of the Joint Operation between the experts deployed for debriefing activities in order to share and update information on facilitating networks. A weekly analytical review of the information gathered would enable the debriefing experts to have an immediate feedback on their job and focus their efforts on any possible intelligence gaps identified.

PART III: Fact sheets – statistics (if needed classified document)

1. Phases of the JO:

- Preparation - containing documentation, invitation and practical arrangements.
- Operation - containing managerial stage and implementation stages.
- Evaluation - containing documentation, conclusions and recommendations.

2. Preparation of the Joint Operation

What	Who	Start	Duration
Preparation of the concept	PM/Team	December 2007	4 weeks
Project Template and budget	HSBS PM/Team	January 2008	2 weeks
Approval Project	TCG/ED	February 2008	1 day
Preparatory meeting in Warsaw	PM/Team Italy-Malta	February 2008	1 day
Visit to hosting MS	PM/Team	March 2008	2 days
Preparatory meeting Warsaw	PM/Team MSs	March 2008	2 days
Operational briefing in Malta	PM/Team MSs	May 2008	3 days
Implementation	PM/Team MSs	May- October 2008	6 months
Evaluation	PM/Team MSs	November 2008	1 day

3. Participation

Belgium: 3 experts (3 periods, 41 days, 1 expert each period) in Lampedusa

France: 1 aircraft (2 periods for 10 and 9 days), 1 offshore patrol vessel for 11 days, 1 NO during the deployment of means based in Malta, 2 experts during the whole operation (85 days in Lampedusa, 73 in Malta);

Germany: Two helicopters in Malta (in two periods, 27 days in total-14 and 13-) and 1 expert for 41 days in Lampedusa;

Greece: 1 expert (15 days);

- Italy: 1 OPV (around 30 days) 4 CPVs based in Lampedusa (2 during the whole period, 1 for 45 days, 1 for 31 days) 2 aircrafts for 10 days each, 1 helicopter for whole period, 2 experts in Malta for 96 days, 3 NOs in the ICC Malta during the deployment of the assets, 1 IO in Lampedusa throughout the operation;
- Luxemburg: 1 surveillance aircraft for 29 days in Malta, 1 NO in the ICC Malta during the deployment of the aircraft and 1 expert for 15 days in Malta;
- Malta: 2 CPBs, 1 aircraft for whole period of the operation
- Portugal: 2 experts during the whole operation in five periods in Lampedusa (in total 5 times 2 experts);
- Romania: 2 experts during the whole operation in four periods, 41 days in Malta, 124 in Lampedusa (in total 4 times 2 experts);
- Spain: 2 experts for 61 days in Lampedusa;
- UK: 1 expert for 96 days in Malta (different persons in shifts).

3.1 General fulfilment of aerial and maritime assets

GENERAL OVERVIEW						
Assets		Member State (authority)	Patrolling hours delivered	Patrolling hours committed	Difference	% OF Fulfillment
Maritime means	CPV P51	MT	486.00	600.00	114.00	81.00%
	CPV P52	MT	465.00	480.00	15.00	96.88%
	CPV 400 class	IT GC	194.00	200.00	6.00	97.00%
	CPV 200 class	IT GC	205.00	150.00	-55.00	136.67%
	CPV	IT GdF	399.00	518.00	119.00	77.03%
	CPV	IT GdF	389.00	518.00	129.00	75.10%
	OPV P61	MT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%
	OPV	Italy Navy	744.00	920.00	176.00	80.87%
	OPV	FR Navy	255.00	336.00	81.00	75.89%
Aerial means	Helicopters Super Puma	DE	284.25	318.00	33.75	89.39%
	Helicopter AB	IT GdF	186.00	222.00	36.00	83.78%
	Fixed Wing Aircraft Islander	MT	95.50	221.00	125.50	43.21%
	Fixed Wing Aircraft Merlin	LUX	81.00	92.00	11.00	88.04%
	Fixed Wing Aircraft Falcon	FR	93.10	90.00	-3.10	103.44%
	Fixed Wing Aircraft	IT GC	0.00	22.00	22.00	0.00%
	Fixed Wing Aircraft P180	Italy Navy	17.30	30.00	12.70	57.67%

NAUTILUS 2008/Assets statistic and overview				
Deployment (days)	Number of patrolling hours planned in grant	Number of patrolling hours delivered	% OF FULLFILLMENT	Patrolling hours delivered - average per day
152	5417	4080	75.31%	26.8

In most of the cases patrolling time delivered does not cover transfer to/from operational area. On average, transfer accounts for 10 % of patrolling time delivered

Bearing in mind a more cost effective management, and in our effort to reach the 90% of the patrolling hours to be used for operative actions and 10% for transfer, we can conclude that an average of 85% was achieved.

Some assets excelled in this respect, and others proved not to be as suitable as it was anticipated. The attached table illustrates the deployment of maritime and aerial resources.

3.2 Timetable of deployed aerial and maritime assets

- 2 German helicopters; Super Puma (17.05.-26.05; 25.08.-19.09.);
- 1 Maltese aircraft; Islander (entire operation time frame);
- 1 Italian aircraft (Navy); Piaggio P180 (11.08.-17.08.);
- 1 Italian helicopter (G.d.F) (entire operation time frame);
- 1 French aircraft; Falcon 50 (17.07. – 26.07.; 03.09.-11.09.);
- 2 Maltese CPV; Marine Protector class (entire operation time frame);
- 2 Italian CPVs (CG) on Lampedusa class 400/200 (1306. - 14.08.);
- 2 Italian CPVs (GdF) on Lampedusa (entire operation time frame);
- 1 Italian OPV (Navy) Comandante class, Minerva class (05.07.-06.08.);
- 1 Luxembourg's aircraft, Type Merlin (21.09.-14.10.);
- 1 French OPV "ARAGO" (15.09.-25.09.)

3.3 Deployment of Experts on Malta and Lampedusa detention centre

Italy:	2
Germany:	2
Belgium:	1
Romania:	2
UK:	1
Portugal:	2
France:	2

Spain: 1

Luxembourg: 1

4. Budget implementation

The budget was allocated over the period of implementation. The initial budget foreseen in the Project Template was 3.8 M Euro. There were 5 amendments to the budget reaching a 6.7 M Euro at the end.

4.1 Final budget – amendment of 4 August 2008

Project number (to be filled in by Finance Unit):

2008/OPS/04 Amendment no 5

Project title:

JO Nautilus 2008				
CATEGORIES	Unit	no of units	Unit price	TOTAL (EUR)
1 MISSIONS of Frontex staff				89,169.50
Flight tickets	return ticket	25	750.00	18,750.00
Hotel nights (Malta)1 coordinator	nights*person	290	115.00	33,350.00
Hotel nights (Italy) Lampedusa	nights*person	67	135.00	9,045.00
Per diem (Malta)	day*person	120	90.00	10,800.00
Per diem (Italy)	day*person	30	95.00	2,850.00
Rent of car	item	185	75.00	13,875.00
Contingency for missions (up to 5%)	lump sum			499.50
2 PARTICIPANTS (reimbursement to invited guests)				45,150.00
Flight tickets	return ticket	40	750.00	30,000.00
Hotel nights	nights*person	45	140.00	6,300.00
Per diem	day*person	80	90.00	7,200.00
Contingency for participants (up to 5%)	lump sum			1,650.00
3 GLOBAL (grants, services, equipment, etc.)				6,683,815.00
Grant agreements	lump sum	1		6,579,590.00
Services related to meetings	lump sum			8,000.00
Contingency for Global (up to 5%)	lump sum			96,225.00
OVERALL TOTAL COSTS OF THE PROJECT				6,818,134.50

4.2 Grant budget

Allocation of Grant budget							
MS	Deployment	Total	Direct	Indirect	Frontex	MS	Payment
BE	3 experts	13,117.45	12,259.30	858.15	8,014.85	5,102.60	7,467.01
FR	2 experts, 1 aircraft, 1 OPV	1,129,117.85	1,117,938.47	11,179.38	961,185.25	167,932.60	961,185.25
DE	2 experts, 2 helicopters	1,790,531.77	1,772,803.73	17,728.04	1,660,672.46	129,859.30	1,392,689.90
GR	1 expert	4,431.62	4,141.70	289.92	3,239.92	1,191.70	3,239.92
IT	2 experts, 2 aircrafts, 1 helicopter, 4 CPVs, 1 OPV	3,968,275.17	3,928,985.32	39,289.85	2,763,007.83	1,205,267.37	2,763,007.83
LU	1 expert, 1 aircraft	363,336.94	345,846.02	17,490.92	328,587.37	34,749.57	328,587.37
MT	1 aircraft, 2 CPVs, 1 OPV	1,202,963.47	1,169,060.71	33,902.76	707,085.47	495,878.00	510,531.73
PT	2 experts	120,747.27	114,997.40	5,749.87	90,788.87	29,958.40	57,363.56
RO	2 experts	91,176.84	85,212.00	5,964.84	83,304.84	7,872.00	45,578.50
ES		18,420.05	17,215.00	1,205.05	13,317.45	5,102.60	11,603.98
UK	1 expert	76,237.50	71,250.00	4,987.50	38,737.50	37,500.00	29,599.89
Total		8,778,355.93	8,639,709.65	138,646.28	6,657,941.81	2,120,414.14	6,110,854.94

5. Statistics

5.1 2008

TOTAL NUMBER OF INCIDENTS	307
Incidents inside the operational areas	100
Incidents outside operational areas	207
Illegal Migrants detected in operational areas/ early detection	4,991
Illegal Migrants detected outside operational areas	9,857
Total number of arrivals in Malta	2,321
Total numbers of arrivals in Lampedusa/Linosa	16,018

5.2 Top five nationalities

LAMPEDUSA

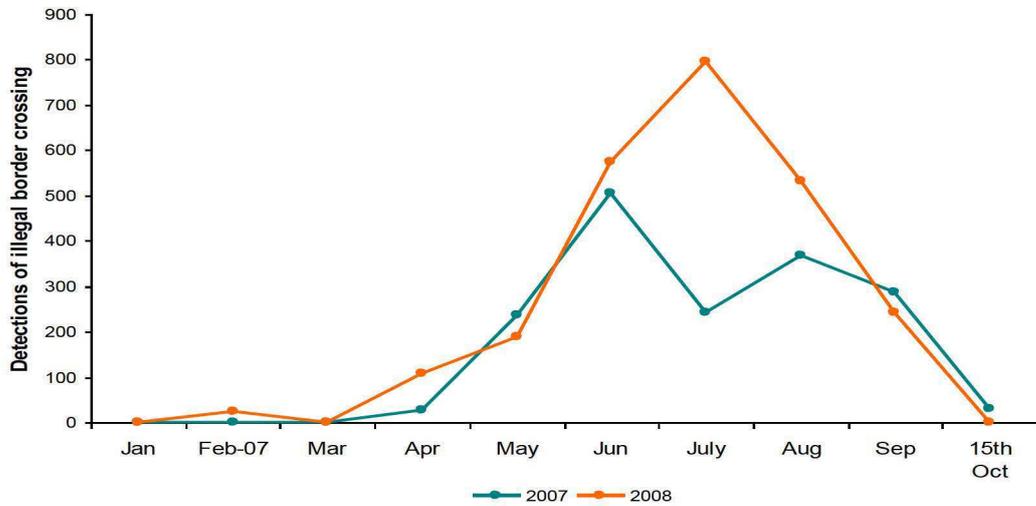
- Nigerians 3,765
- Eritrean 2,720
- Somali 2,387
- Tunisian 2,157
- Ghanaian 1,237

MALTA

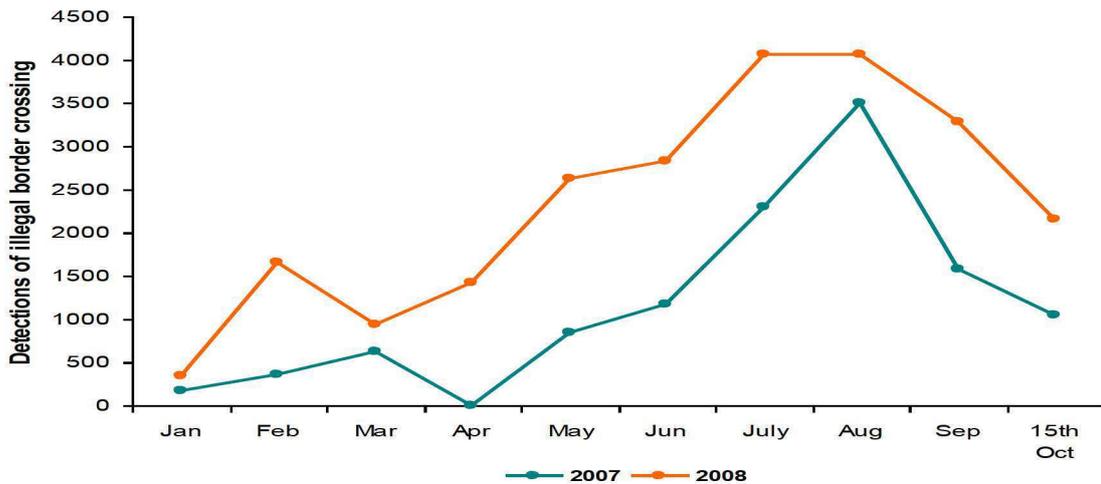
- Somali 1,184
- Nigerians 212
- Mali 176
- Ivory Coast 132
- Eritrean 152

5.3 Comparison between 2007 and 2008

The charts below illustrate the number of the arrivals compared with 2007, during the entire implementation period of the operation.



Malta – increased with 45.5%



Italy - increases with 107%

6. Maps referring to the operational area, other maps.

Corner Points: **W & E** Lat: Lon:

A)	34 20' N	012 50' E
B)	34 20' N	014 50' E
C)	34 00' N	012 50' E
D)	34 00' N	014 50' E

Corner Points: **L** Lat: Lon:

A)	35 45' N	011 40' E
B)	35 45' N	012 20' E
C)	35 00' N	012 20' E
D)	35 00' N	012 50' E
E)	34 20' N	012 50' E
F)	34 20' N	012 00' E
G)	35 00' N	012 00' E
H)	35 15' N	011 40' E

