

This monthly press review covers Eurafrican migration control, migration and displacement in African countries and news on the European border regime. In case there is a news item, report, or campaign you would like to flag for in next month's review please write us to: [migr-contr@ffm-online.org](mailto:migr-contr@ffm-online.org) or on Twitter [@MigControl](https://twitter.com/MigControl)

### TOPIC OF THE MONTH

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**Blog Racist and fascist attacks – Call for Donations for Black people in Tunisia:** “In recent weeks, Black people in Tunisia face a repressive wave of arbitrary arrests and police and state violence as well as physical attacks by organized and non-organized civil groups. Targeting people coming from Central and West African countries, the already existing racism in the country has escalated. [...] We call for international solidarity to support sub-Saharan people in Tunisia.”

### NEW ON MIGRATION-CONTROL.INFO

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**Blog and Leaked Document Internal EU-Document: „Update on State of Play of External Cooperation“, February 2023:** The Commission Services of the European Council regularly edit updates „on the state of play“ to the Working Party on External Aspects of Asylum and Migration, which is a preparatory body of the European Council. We have already published the Update January 2022 and the Update May 2022 and have not received the update on the state of play, 9. February 2023.

**Blog and Leaked Document MOCADEM in Action: Following the Italian Road in Libya:** “We have received a new document, directed from the EU Presidency to the MOCADEM delegations. The paper shows that the EU's use of „any available leverage“ includes the use of humanitarian aid as a means of keeping refugees out of Europe, as we already noted one year ago. Furthermore, it sheds a light on the activities of the Italian intelligence agencies, which started in 2017 and have now become official EU policy. They are directed to foster cooperation with Libyan (and Sudanese) militias to stop people on the move.”

**Blog From the Horn of Africa to the Mediterranean: by Sudan Uprising Germany and the Migration Control Info Project:** This article is part of a series of articles on migration movements into, in, and out of Sudan. Dedicated to the 4th anniversary of the Sudanese Revolution, the first publication aims to accompany people on the move, shed a light on the experiences and injustices they face, which are so severely increased by European externalization policies. Also available in [German](#) and [Arabic](#).

## CENTRAL AFRICA

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**Uganda** 21.02.23: taz: **Erdölförderung in Uganda (Oil production in Uganda)**: “Uganda is building the controversial EACOP oil pipeline - despite massive protests from climate activists. Farmers are being resettled in questionable ways.”

## NORTH AFRICA

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**Morocco** 27.02.23: Atalyar: **Morocco-US: new agreements to ensure Sahel stability**: “The Director General of National Security [...] received in Rabat, Christopher Wray, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of the United States. During the talks, the two sides discussed mechanisms for combating the movement of fighters of terrorist organisations through border crossings, and for exchanging information on these fighters, as well as consolidating operational cooperation in the fight against threats related to chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and nuclear threats, and extending the scope of outstanding bilateral cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism to the Sahel region.”

**Morocco/Spain** 02.02.23: Al Jazeera: **Spain, Morocco seek reset of testy relationship at Rabat summit**: “Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez says Spain and Morocco have agreed to set aside their differences as they seek to repair a relationship marked by frequent disputes over migration and territory. Sanchez was speaking on Thursday [02.02.23] at a summit in Rabat where the two countries signed about 20 agreements to boost trade and investment, including credit lines of up to 800 million euros.”

**West Sahara** 01.02.23: TNH: **Western Sahara’s ‘frozen conflict’ heats up, but world’s attention elsewhere**: As the conflict has intensified, many frustrated Sahrawis have compared the rush of Western support to Ukraine with the neglect of their fight for independence, in what has been dubbed “Africa’s last colony”.

**Tunisia** 22.02.22: Al Jazeera: **Tunisia’s Saied says migration aimed at changing demography**: “President Kais Saied has alleged that undocumented immigration from sub-Saharan African countries is aimed at changing Tunisia’s demographic composition, drawing criticism from human rights activists. His comments during a meeting of the National Security Council on Tuesday followed the arrests of dozens of migrants this month in a crackdown.”

*See also* 30.01.23: Al Jazeera: **Another uprising is in the making in Tunisia**; 18.02.23: Al Jazeera: **Tunisia unions protest against economic woes, official’s arrest**: Thousands of Tunisian trade unionists have held protests across the country over worsening economic woes and the arrest of a top union official. The North African country is in drawn-out talks with the International Monetary Fund for a bailout loan; 22.02.23: Statewatch: **Arbitrary arrests and hate campaigns against sub-Saharan migrants in Tunisia**; 23.02.22: The Guardian: **Tunisia’s president calls for halt to sub-Saharan immigration amid crackdown on opposition**: A public meeting on Wednesday night in Tunis, called in response to the president’s comments, heard testimonies from migrant families being evicted from their homes, children in nurseries being seized by officials and raids on entire neighbourhoods. Many migrants have also reported

not venturing outdoors for days for fear of arrest or detention. 24.02.22: France24: **Xenophobia grows amidst raids and repeated attacks on sub-Saharan Africans in Tunisia**: Tunisian law enforcement has launched a wave of repression against the country's sub-Saharan African population, carrying out random identity checks and sometimes violently arresting them, leaving their children abandoned and offering no access to any kind of legal support. Xenophobic and racist sentiments have also been circulating widely on Tunisian social media, a toxic climate that recent statements by the Tunisian president only exacerbated. Report: 26.02.23: Inkyfada: **“On est à la merci de tout le monde” : Les Subsaharien-nes face aux violences racistes en Tunisie**; 25.02.23: The Guardian: **Hundreds in Tunisia protest against president's anti-migrant clampdown**; 26.02.22: The Guardian: **What you need to know about Tunisia's anti-racism protests**: Hundreds of people have protested on the streets of the Tunisian capital to denounce President Kais Saied, accusing him of racist comments and hate speech against refugees; 25.02.13: Al Jazeera: **African Union condemns Tunisia's 'hate speech' against migrants**; 01.03.23: Al Jazeera: **Tunisia tennis star urges 'dignity' amid crackdown on immigrants**; 01.03.23: Tunisia: **Statement against the racist and securitarian drift in Tunisia: Call for action and solidarity**.

**Libya** 05.02.23: LibyaUpdate: **Libya's ambassador to EU discusses with ICMPD migration policies**: “The Libyan Ambassador to the European Union, Jalal Al-Ashi, has discussed with the Head of Mission at International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) in Brussels, Ralph Genetzke, migration policies and the expertise provided by the center to Libya.”

**Sudan** 09.02.23: Al Jazeera: **Russia's Lavrov visits Sudan on diplomatic push in Africa's Sahel**: “Sudan was cut off from billions of dollars in international financing after military leaders overthrew a Western-backed transitional government in 2021. At the same time as receiving Lavrov, Sudanese authorities were this week hosting envoys from the United States, United Kingdom and France, who are supporting talks to form a new democratic civilian government in Sudan. Sudan's governing military council has previously considered allowing Russia to open a naval base on the Red Sea coast, a strategic region where Gulf countries and Turkey also vie for influence.”

**Sudan** 29.01.23: **Sudan, Chad agree to strengthening operations of joint border force**: “The transition's leaders in Sudan and Chad agreed on Sunday to bolster joint patrols of the two armies along the border after the increase of insecurity and attacks in the triangle area with the Central African Republic (CAR). The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) of Mohamed Hamdan Daglo “Hemetti” increased its activities along the border area with the CAR and West Darfur border area with Chad marginalizing the joint border force that Chad and Sudan established in 2010. Recently, reports from the CAR mentioned joint operations including RSF, CAR army and the Russian Wagner contractors against rebel groups in the border area with Sudan and northern CAR where are also stationed Chadians rebels.”

## WEST AFRICA

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**Burkina Faso/Mali/Guinea** 10.02.23: Africanews: West Africa junta regimes seek reentry to regional blocs: “The top diplomats of Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso said in a joint statement that they had agreed to work together to push for the lifting of their suspensions from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU).”

*See also* 01.02.23: Jeune Afrique: Le Burkina Faso et le Mali bientôt unis dans une fédération ?; 13.02.23: Maliweb: Projet de fédération Mali-Guinée-Burkina : La Cédéao rejette l'initiative.

**Burkina Faso** 24.02.23: AfricaNews: Burkina Faso to recruit 5,000 soldiers to fight Jihadists: “This is the third time in less than a year that the Burkinabe army has organised such recruitment. In April 2022, 3,000 soldiers, aged up to 26, had already been recruited. The same procedure was also launched last October.”

*See also* 22.02.23: Le MOnde: Le nord du Burkina Faso sous le feu des groupes djihadistes; 25.02.23: VOA News: Over 70 Soldiers Killed in Burkina Faso, Extremists Say; 27.02.23: France TV: Au Burkina Faso, l'or des mines intéresse les militaires.

**Ivory Coast** 21.02.23: Reuters: France eyes Ivory Coast after Burkina Faso boots out French troops: “France's defence minister pledged on Monday to boost military support to Ivory Coast, as Paris adjusts its strategy in West Africa after neighbouring Burkina Faso ordered French troops to leave and vowed to curb a worsening Islamist insurgency solo.”

*See also* 20.02.23: Reuters: Burkina Faso marks official end of French military operations on its soil.

## EUROPE

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**Bulgaria** 18.02.23: bulgaria.bordermonitoring.eu: 18 Afghan refugees die in a truck near Sofia: “According to Bulgarian authorities 18 dead Afghans were found yesterday [18.02.2023] in an abandoned truck in the area of Sofia, near the village of Lokorsko. In total more than 50 people were on board. [...] The truck came from the Turkish-Bulgarian border and was probably on its way to the Bulgarian-Serbian border.”

**Bulgaria** 26.02.23: bulgaria.bordermonitoring.eu: One refugee dies on Trakia highway: “A minibus with 46 refugees from Afghanistan crashed at the "Trakiya" highway in the are of Chirpan because of a flat tire. One refugee died at the scene of the accident. 30 injured were taken to nearby hospitals, two are in a serious condition and in intensive care. In total 26 refugees have to stay in a hospital at Stara Zagora. Another Van with 50 refugees was intercepted this morning.”

**Italy/Libya** 06.02.23: EUobserver: EU hands Libya coast guard boats ahead of migration summit: “The EU commission gave the Libyan Coast Guard the first of five

new EU-funded patrol boats to help prevent migrants and asylum seekers from fleeing to Europe.”

*See also* 31.01.23: SRF: **Italienisches Abkommen mit Libyen: Mehr Erdgas, weniger Migranten** (Italian agreement with Libya: more natural gas, fewer migrants); 07.02.23: itamilradar: **Italian Navy rescues Italian fishing boats attacked by a Libyan patrol boat.**

**Italy/Mediterranean** 27.02.23: **The Guardian: Italy shipwreck death toll rises to 62 as more bodies pulled from sea**: “Sixty-two people have been found dead so far, up from 59 on Sunday, provincial officials said on Monday morning. Eighty people have been rescued, of whom 20 were taken to hospital.”

*See also* 01.03.23: Euractiv: **Frontex warned Italy of possible ‘large number of people’ before shipwreck**; 27.02.23: Taz: **8.000 Euro für die Fahrt in den Tod (8,000 Euro for the ride into death).**

**Greece/Turkey** 26.02.23: Guardian: **Greece fortifies border to block refugees from Turkish-Syrian earthquakes**: “Greece has reinforced border controls along its land and sea frontier with Turkey amid expectations of a new wave of arrivals by people displaced in the earthquakes that have devastated south-east Turkey and northern Syria. Hundreds of extra border guards began patrolling the Greek-Turkish land frontier in the Evros region at the weekend as contingency measures were stepped up to stave off the expected flows.” According to the Turkish Ministry of Migration, the facility was partly financed by the European Union - with grants of 108 million euros.

**Italy** 07.02.23: Mediterranea: **Adria: Protest Ruins Horror Propaganda**: A hundred activists protested against the shameful ceremony at which the Italian government and the European Commission handed over a new patrol boat to the Libyan militias.

**Italy** 09.02.23: Various: **Meloni in Libya and Algeria:**

**Meloni in Libya:**

<https://ilmanifesto.it/cinque-motovedette-a-tripoli-per-fermare-i-migranti>

<https://global.ilmanifesto.it/meloni-will-use-libya-as-a-gas-station-bought-with-refugees-lives/>

[https://www.huffingtonpost.it/esteri/2023/01/28/news/eni\\_avvia\\_un\\_importante\\_progetto\\_di\\_sviluppo\\_del\\_gas\\_in\\_libia-11184427/](https://www.huffingtonpost.it/esteri/2023/01/28/news/eni_avvia_un_importante_progetto_di_sviluppo_del_gas_in_libia-11184427/)

[https://www.ilmessaggero.it/politica/gas\\_italia\\_libia\\_meloni\\_eni\\_governo\\_ultime\\_notizie-7196309.html](https://www.ilmessaggero.it/politica/gas_italia_libia_meloni_eni_governo_ultime_notizie-7196309.html)

[https://www.corriere.it/economia/consumi/23\\_gennaio\\_28/meloni-libia-accordo-eni-noc-gas-perche-l-investimento-8-miliardi-strategico-9be1227e-9f12-11ed-a35f-cb762b703658.shtml](https://www.corriere.it/economia/consumi/23_gennaio_28/meloni-libia-accordo-eni-noc-gas-perche-l-investimento-8-miliardi-strategico-9be1227e-9f12-11ed-a35f-cb762b703658.shtml)

<https://www.geopolitica.info/meloni-libia-accordo-energetico-migranti/>

<https://www.fanpage.it/politica/cinque-navi-per-salvare-i-migranti-e-un-maxi-accordo-sul-gas-cosa-e-andata-a-fare-meloni-in-libia/>

**Meloni in Algeria:**

<https://ilmanifesto.it/lhub-del-gas-italiano-e-unidea-antistorica>

**Turkey** 27.02.23: taz: **Die Mauern werden höher (The walls grow higher)**: The Director General for Combating Irregular Migration and Deportation Affairs, Ramazan Seçilmen, stated in December 2022 that 61,617 people had been deported to Afghanistan that year. After Turkey initially erected a highly upgraded border fortification with modern surveillance technologies, drones, armored vehicles and even self-firing systems along almost 900 kilometers of the Syrian border, the project was also extended to the border with Iran - the escape route from Afghanistan. The three-meter-high wall in the Van region is now 297 kilometers long.

**Turkey** 34.02.23: Al Jazeera: **Syrian refugees in Turkey face return to quake-stricken areas**: According to government estimates, more than 1.7 million Syrian refugees lived in the 10 southern Turkish provinces devastated by this month's earthquakes. The day after the earthquakes, Turkish authorities issued a directive allowing refugees in the 10 provinces to travel to other cities or provinces, except Istanbul, for up to 90 days if they could secure their own accommodation. But after many refugees fled to Istanbul in the first days following the quakes, the Directorate General of Migration Management revised its decision on a case-by-case basis, allowing families who had already arrived in the metropolis to stay for up to 60 days.

**UK/France** 05.02.23: calais.bordermonitoring.eu: **Small Boats Operational Command**: "We now deal with the Small Boats Operational Command, an authority established on 31 January 2023 to combat the boat passages of the English Channel. This marked the end of Operation Isotrope, which had placed the border policy under a military command in April 2022. However, the transfer of powers back to a civilian body does not mean demilitarisation or even democratisation of the border regime. Rather, the Small Boats Operational Command reinforces the fusion of military and civilian structures into a highly organised and restrictive border regime."

## **EUROPEAN UNION**

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**EU** 08.02.23 taz: **Mehr Grenzschutz und Abschiebungen (More border control and deportations)**: Just before the special summit of the EU heads of state and government on Thursday, 09 February, the taz states: "Just like all previous presidencies, Sweden also wants to push ahead with isolation. More border protection and more deportations, cooperation with transit countries and countries of origin. The EU has been following these recipes since 2016, without a decrease in arrivals or deportations. That's why Sweden now wants to drop its previous inhibitions about cooperating with Libya."

*See also* 10.02.23: Politico: **EU vows more cash for frontier policing as border fence debate revives**; 10.02.23: The Guardian: **EU leaders plan tougher border controls as more people claim asylum**.

**EU/Niger** 20.02.23: Concilium EU: **Niger: EU launches its military partnership mission:** EUMPM Niger will support in particular the establishment of the Centre for the Training of the Technicians of the Armed Forces, provide advice and specialised training on request to the Niger Armed Forces' specialists, and support the creation of a new communication and command support battalion.

**Frontex** 01.03.23: nd: **Frontex drängt nach Westafrika (Frontex pushes into west africa):** "Another idea from Brussels are the so-called status agreements, which are now to be concluded with West African countries, so that Frontex officers can be stationed and deployed locally. These agreements guarantee European officers protection from prosecution by local authorities and the right to carry weapons. [...] The aim of the status agreements planned with Senegal and Mauritania is to shut down the Atlantic route." Two European Parliament parliamentarians just visited Mauritania and Senegal, "The politician does not believe that Dakar will sign the status agreement any time soon."

## REPORTS

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04.02.23 Sage Journals: **The evolution of European border governance through crisis: Frontex and the interplay of protracted and acute crisis narratives:** Within this article, we propose a differentiation between protracted and acute crisis narratives. Focusing on the political work that these two narratives do in relation to European border governance, we demonstrate that the interplay between these crises narratives has contributed to Frontex's evolution and expansion over the last two decades while further consolidating the externalization and fortification of European borders.

05.02.23 medico: **Europas Türsteher und die Taliban (Europe's bouncers and the Taliban):** One of the main escape routes from Afghanistan leads across the Iranian border, and more and more Iranians are trying to escape the brutal persecution by the regime via this border. After Turkey first built a highly upgraded border facility along almost 900 kilometers of the Syrian border with modern surveillance technologies, drones, armored vehicles and even self-fire systems, the project was expanded to include the border with Iran. The three-meter-high border facility in the Van region is still under construction - financed with 108 million euros from the European Union. It is now 297 kilometers long and as deadly as it is porous. At the end of 2021, the Turkish Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) stated that 25 so-called removal centers with a capacity of 15,908 people were currently operating in Turkey. In addition, there are similar facilities under other names and informal places such as old factory halls or tent camps. Even in the removal centers, which can be visited by lawyers, the conditions are catastrophic. The Director General for Combating Irregular Migration and Deportation Affairs, Ramazan Seçilmen, stated in December 2022 that 61,617 people had been deported to Afghanistan this year. To implement this, Turkey has established diplomatic relations with the Taliban. Reports circulate in Istanbul as well as Izmir and Van that so-called "Afghan diplomats" visit deportation prisons and select which people they want to take back. Solidarity networks report that in the Harmandalı removal center, Taliban have been added online during international protection examinations. What happens to Afghans after they are deported is largely unknown.

06.02.23 Alarmphone: [Deadly days along the Tunisian route to Europe](#): Over the last weekend, another massacre happened on the Tunisian route, with several confirmed shipwrecks and deaths, and at least three boats still missing and whose fate is unknown. Some of these events reached public attention, whilst others will be only be remembered by grieving families.

06.02.23 Statewatch: [EU: Interoperable migration and police databases: a data trove for Frontex](#): Frontex, will be able to access vast quantities of data once the EU's 'interoperable' policing and migration databases are fully operational. In particular, its access to extensive new sets of statistics is intended to increase the detail, influence and reach of its risk analyses and policy recommendations.

13.02.23 FluchtforschungsBlog: [Abschreckung in Dauerschleife. Asylzentren in Afrika sind keine Lösung](#) (Deterrence in perpetuity. Asylum centers in Africa are no solution): Freshly appointed to office, the German government's new special representative for migration agreements, Joachim Stamp (FDP), has announced that he will also consider outsourcing asylum procedures to African countries as part of a stricter asylum policy.

14.02.23 NYT: [Greece Border Abuses Highlight Europe's Clashing Priorities on Migration](#): "The top rights officer at Europe's border agency said in a confidential report that it should stop working with Greece because border guards there were mistreating asylum seekers."

10.02.23 BVN Network: [Balkan Regional Report December 22](#): This report brings together first-hand testimonies from a range of countries in the region to look at the way European Union states and other actors are affecting systemic violence towards people crossing borders.

## CAMPAIGNS

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**Online commemoration of those killed by the border regime** Artists in Spain and France started to post every single day the names of all documented deaths of people on the move which had died on that exact same day in previous years. They continue all year. In [French](#) and [Spanish](#).

**Call for Action [Statement against the racist and securitarian drift in Tunisia: Call for action and solidarity](#)**: Manifestation de soutien aux migrants subsahariens en Tunisie/Demonstration in support of sub-Saharan migrants in Tunisia. Vendredi 3 Mars 2023 17h-19h, Ambassade de Tunisie à Paris, Place André Tardieu 75007, Métro Saint François Xavier Ligne 13.

**Solidarity Statement [After the Crotone shipwreck. Solidarity statement for the survivors, and the relatives, friends and community members of those who did not survive](#)**: "Only 81 people survived, while to date 67 bodies have been recovered and several are still missing. [...] We send our deepest condolences to the families, friends



and communities of the dead and missing. [...] The way forward looks every day more impervious, but still, all this pain and injustice needs urgently to be turned into new strength, to continue the struggle against state violence and for the freedom of movement.”

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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**Book Presentation and Discussion** 02.03.23, 2 - 3.30 pm CET, online: **In defence of defenders: criminalised solidarity in Europe**: Launch event and online panel discussion on potential support on a policy, legal and practical level for criminalised Human Rights Defenders in Europe organised by The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung in cooperation with the Border Violence Monitoring Network. Register [here](#) before 1 March 2023.

**Discussion** 28.03.23, 7 pm CET, Berlin: **Lässt sich Migration managen? Sieben Jahre EU-Türkei-Deal als Vorbild für Europas Grenzregime? (Can migration be managed? Seven years of the EU-Turkey deal as a model for Europe's border regime?)**: “The EU-Turkey Declaration of March 2016 promised fewer deaths, rule-of-law treatment in orderly, speedy procedures and more direct resettlement. It has had a lasting impact on current European migration policy. Yet seven years on, the EU's external borders are still marked by death, destitution, camps, disenfranchisement and ever more closure and violence. Looking back on the Declaration, lessons can be learned for a future migration policy that focuses on solidarity and reception instead of isolation. How can a human rights-based European asylum system be built today? How can the brutalisation of the EU border regime be countered? What needs to happen to end the deaths at Europe's external borders?” With Gerald Knaus, Clara Bünger, Valeria Hänsel and Christian Jakob. And can we really “learn” something from the 2016 EU-Turkey deal which Knaus promoted? And are we really in need of offshore processing centres as Knaus has suggested them?