

## Bloody Mediterranean

Giulia Madron (October 03, 2013)



So far 94 people are reported dead in today's tragic event off the shore of Lampedusa, among them 4 children and a pregnant woman. The political world reacts to another incident that could have been prevented...

The journey of hope turned out to be the journey of death. At sunrise this morning, off the seashore of Lampedusa, a boat with almost 500 migrants from Libia stood up in flames and in turn tipped over, bringing death and spreading desperation in the area.

94 is the disquieting number of deaths reported so far, among which are 4 children and a pregnant woman. This dramatic event was apparently originated on board, when some immigrants set fire to a blanket in order to be seen by a fishing boat near by.



According to the police authorities, the fire spread throughout the boat, burning it, due to an existing fuel leak. The alarm was sent by two boats that were passing by. The rescuers came right away and are still working hard to help people who are still afloat. So far, out of the 500 immigrants who left Libya 12 hours ago, only 151 were rescued and brought to safety of the Lampedusa harbor. However, more than 250 are still missing.

Reactions from the political world after this tragic event came right away. The Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta met with the Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs Angelino Alfano, who immediately went to the island of Lampedusa to see the developing tragedy. "This is not only an Italian problem, but we have to understand it is a European problem as well," declared Alfano, whom this afternoon will speak on the phone with José Barroso, President of the European Commission.

Pope Francis, who in July visited the Island and spoke out against the 'globalization of indifference' towards the immigrants, faced with such tragedy could only declare: "The only word that comes up is shame, it's a shame!"

This inauspicious event occurred just one day after the the European Union's disapprobation of Italy's immigration policies. The EU Commissioner Johannes Hahn commented on the current calamity: "The EU institutions express all their suffering for what happened in Lampedusa. This tragedy saw the death of children. "The EU has to figure out how it can help." affirmed Hahn. The European Council, according to the ANSA agency, assured that Europe has to show more solidarity towards Italy, and mostly in regards to the illegal immigration.

What took place today adds to all the dramatic accidents that the Mediterranean sea witnessed in the past 10 years. So far, more than 6200 people died crossing the canal of Sicily.

**Source URL:** <http://iitaly.org/magazine/focus/facts-stories/article/bloody-mediterranean>

### Links

[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/lampedusa1380819604jpg>