

BOATS 4 PEOPLE

Transnational Newsletter No. 2 (Juni 2012)

boats
4 people
FREEDOM NOT FRONTEX

It's only two weeks from now that the Boats4People tour in the Mediterranean will start. We have a sailing boat, **the Oloferne**, that will be sailing the whole trip, accompanied by some smaller boats. If you are interested to join at any of the 5 stations, please contact us and let us know. You can also find some ideas below on how to support the project with local activities in the place where you live.

The (provisional) programme: (check our [agenda](#) for the latest updates)

Cecina/Rosignano (Italy)
– July 1 and 2

Initiatives planned in the framework of the annual anti-racist conference organized by ARCI in Cecina.

July 1 morning: Workshop on “Migration and sea”. Items are the law of the sea, immigration law, emergency procedures at sea, etc. This is a first initiative to address a long-term goal of B4P: build a “warning” network of sailors aware of the situation of migrants at sea

July 1 afternoon: Workshop on the complaint filed in France as part of the wreck that took place in the Mediterranean Sea in March 2011, called the “Guardian case” or the “left-to-die boat”. The theme is that of solidarity, duty relief (Law of the Sea), violations of the obligation of aid and of the impunity of states.

July 2 (morning):

- Press conference.
- Ship's departure port Boats 4 People Rosignano (near Cecina).
- Action on the beach in Cecina in commemoration of the migrants that died at sea.

At sea July 2 to 5

Palermo / Trapani (Italy)
– July 5, 6 and 7

July 5: Arrival of the boat in Palermo. At 5 p.m. (at Santa Chiara) a transnational information event will be held on **“The criminalization of migrants and**

sea rescue VS crime of immigration controls”: Migrants and refugees will talk about their experiences in the camp Choucha and on the route to Europe, lawyers will report about the criminalisation of rescuers, activists will speak about campaigns against Frontex. The event will include film-presentations and exhibitions.

July 6:

- Press conference.
- Visit to the Detention-Camp Trapani Milo and / or Serraino Vulpitta.
- Palermo-night action from the port: Commemoration for the migrants who died at sea.

At sea July 7 to 12

July 7: Departure of the boat Oloferne to Tunisia to reach Monastir on July 12.

Tunisia 7 to 16

July 7: Simultaneous transfer of the transnational travelling-group by commercial ferry to Tunis.

July 8 – 11 in Tunis: meetings with local activists, information and discussion events, film-screenings.

Delegation to Choucha to prepare the participation and presentation of transit-refugees and migrants in Monastir. (date not confirmed yet)

Monastir (Tunisia)
– July 12 to 16

Key initiatives planned under international preparatory meetings of the World Social Forum 2013 (Tunisia).

July 12: an artistic event.

July 13:

- Arrival of the vessel Boats 4 People with Tunisian fishing boats in Monastir.
- Conference on **“Border closures and the impact on land and at sea on both sides of the Mediterranean”:** Exchange experiences on harragas, missing migrants and migrants' detention.
- Action on the beach: 800 lanterns launched in commemoration of the migrants that died at sea.

At sea July 16 and 17

Lampedusa – July 18, 19 and 20

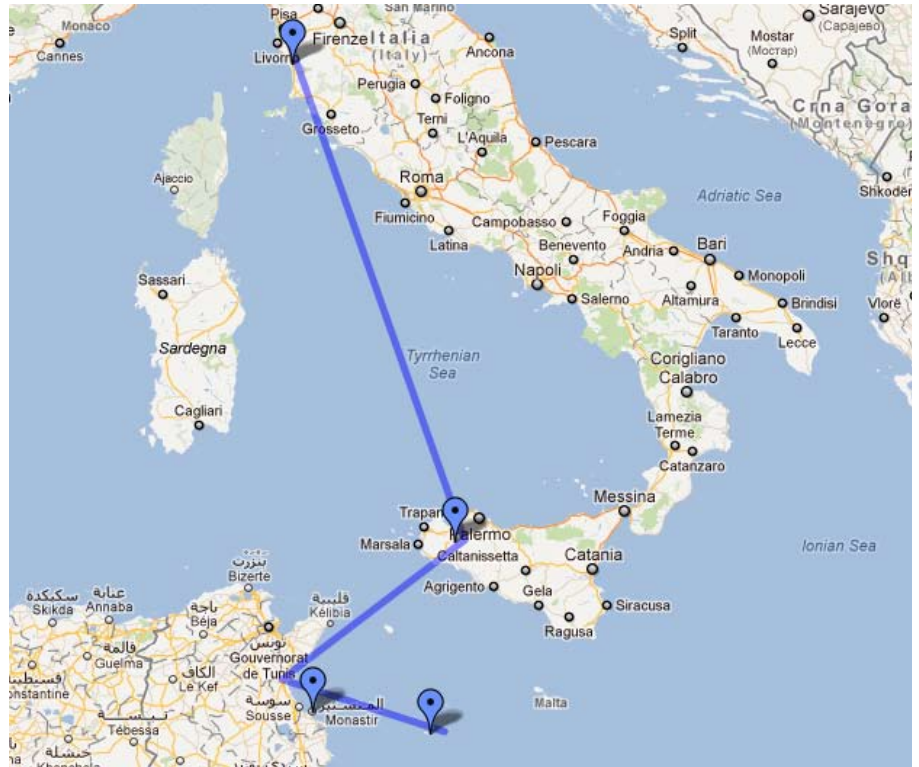
Key initiatives in collaboration with the **LampedusaInFestival**

July 19:

- Press conference, presentation and installation of the artistic works donated by Tunisian artists to the Museum of migration of Lampedusa.
- Commemoration of the migrants that died at the Mediterranean sea. Action in port with 1500 flowers thrown into the sea.
- LampedusaInFestival opening (Gate of Europe) with a concert.
- Screening of “Mare Chiuso” (“Closed Sea”) and then debate on “The right to protection. What future for international protection in Italy?”

News of the region

In the first 5 months of 2012 more than 100 boat migrants **died** in the Canal of Sicily. In Libya, the authorities say they **stopped more than 430 boat migrants** in May 2012, and it seems that they have been detained. A start has been made in a coordination between the authorities of Italy, Malta, **Tunisia** and **Libya** regarding rescue actions, including military vessels and cargo ships, with the **coordinated goal** to bring the boat migrants back to Libya or Tunisia. In one case migrants refused to be rescued and be sent back to Libya. They continued the precarious travel until the zone of Malta, to be rescued there and be brought to Malta.



The situation in Choucha

More than 3000 migrants still live in the camps in Choucha (Tunisia) near the Libyan border. A part of the group has been accepted as refugees and wait for resettlement-places, another part of the group waits for the UNHCR decision to be accepted. At least several hundred are refused to get any status and for a lot of newcomers no procedure will be started. A process of **selforganisation and protests** has started in recent months under the name Voice of Choucha. On May 14 they **demonstrated** to show their concern of the rejected cases, the lack of resettlement and the difficulties of people living in the camp.

A delegation from Boats4People will visit Choucha and invite Choucha-refugee-communities to the conferences, meetings and activities in Monastir to express themselves and their demands. Together we will elaborate common actions and claims.

The 'left-to-die boat' and Forensic Oceanography

In our first newsletter we spoke about **the case** of the boat between Libya and Italy that drifted at sea for two weeks in March and April last year, with 72 migrants, of which only 9 people survived. On April 11, with support of a coalition of NGOs including Boats4People, several survivors from the boat convened in Paris to file a **court case**, supplemented by a report of Forensic Oceanography, against the French Army for non-assistance to people in distress at sea. **Forensic Oceanography** (FO) is an investigation from researchers of Goldsmith University into the conditions that have caused the death of more than 1500 persons fleeing Libya across the Central Mediterranean in the spring of 2011 (**estimate by UNHCR**). The project looks for ways in which a wide range of technologies and media might be used to document violations of human rights at sea and increase accountability in the future. Amongst the several cases of deaths of migrants at sea reported by the press and documented by FO in the course of its research, the case of the 'left-to-die boat' has been the main focus of the project so far. The FO team has provided technical expertise in the form of maps and visual material on this specific case published in a **report**.

Families disparus

A group of Tunisian families of missing relatives together with the organisations ARCI and ASGI have **requested** that the Public Prosecutor's Office in Rome open an investigation into the fate of about 270 Tunisian migrants who tried to reach Italy in 2011. Their action follows the campaign "From one side to the other: lives that count" (Da una sponda all'altra: vite che contano) led by The Female Collective Le venticinque undici (The twenty-five eleven). They don't want to resign themselves to the idea that their beloved ones just vanished. Did they ever reach Italy? Have they been pushed back? They need answers. The collective consists of the migrants' relatives who have not received contact from their missing family members for over a year.

You can make a donation by:

Bank transfer to the account of « Boats 4 People », IBAN FR76 1027 8060 1100 0202 6600 255 BIC: CMCIFR2A
Owner: Migreurop

Or through our website by using a credit card or Paypal account.

Groups involved

Boats 4 People is an international organisation, created with the aim of defending migrants' rights at sea. It brings together the following organisations:

International networks:

Afrique-Europe-Interact
Euro-African network Migreurop
FIDH (International Federation For Human Rights)

France:

CCFD-Terre Solidaire (Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour le Développement)
FASTI (Fédération des Associations de Travailleurs Immigrés)
Cimade
GISTI (Groupe d'Information et de Soutien des Immigrés)
RESF 13 (Réseau Éducation Sans Frontières Bouches du Rhône)

Germany:

Flüchtlingsrat Hamburg (Refugee Council Hamburg)
Welcome to Europe

Italy:

ARCI (Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana)

Mali:

AME (Association Malienne des Expulsés)
ARACEM (Association des Refoulés d'Afrique Centrale au Mali)

Morocco:

ABCDS (Association Beni Znassen pour la Culture, le Développement et la Solidarité)
GADEM (Groupe antiraciste d'accompagnement et de défense des étrangers et migrants)

Netherlands:

All Included

Tunisia:

CETUMA (Centre de Tunis pour la Migration et l'Asile)
FTDES (Forum Tunisien pour les Droits Économiques et Sociaux)

What you can do from abroad

If you cannot participate in the tour but you want to support the project, we still need a lot of support:

Financial support: if you have an idea to raise money or to collect donations, please do so! Our budget still lacks about 10000 Euro and it would help a lot if all interested people help with crowd-funding. Contact us if you need any information at: support@boats4people.org

Local actions: in some cities as in France (Paris), Italy (Rome), Austria (Vienna), Germany (Berlin and Hamburg) and the Netherlands, local groups plan to organise solidarity-actions with Boats4People. These events are planned for July 7 and 13. You can join these activities (contacts below). Or perhaps you want to organize a solidarity event in your city? Let us know about your action at: support@boats4people.org

Spread the news: During the tour we will publish news and reports. It would be great and very helpful if you help to spread the information. Contact us if you need any information at: support@boats4people.org

Music for B4P

In support of Boats4People 17 African and European music groups have contributed to a Boats4People mp3 album with songs on migration, freedom and the sea. [Download](#) this album for 10 benefit euros.



Background of the project

The European border control system causes many deaths each year. In 2011 in the Mediterranean alone at least 1500 boat migrants died during their journey (source UNHCR). Meanwhile the EU border management agency Frontex, along with national navy and air forces and aided by fixed and mobile radars, controls everything that happens in the Mediterranean Sea. Boats4people aims to expose the situation at the EU borders and to point out how the EU and Frontex, the collaborating Libyan and Tunisian authorities and in some cases together with NATO, are responsible for a criminal policy and the violation of human rights.

We call upon:

- The EU to end its violent control of maritime borders
- Governments of Africa to break with the past and refuse to sign readmission agreements which result in violations of migrants' human rights
- All countries to stop prosecuting those who rescue migrants in accordance with the law of the sea under which all sailors must "proceed with all possible speed to the rescue of persons in distress" (art. 98 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea).

Boats4People aims to observe the situation in the Mediterranean Sea, collect information on the situation of migrants, disseminate it in the media and denounce the role played by the EU. Boats4People also participates in the preparation of legal files on cases of non-assistance by European military or border control boats. Another objective is to build a network of sailors to alert us to violations of migrants' human rights at sea.

The cooperation between European and African organizations, activists and researchers is meant as a step towards a strong long-term alliance. By mobilizing people in the Mediterranean, Africa and Europe we strive for a Mediterranean that will become a place of solidarity and cease to be a mass grave for migrants. We advocate freedom of movement for all.

Contacts by country

Germany: germany@boats4people.org

Netherlands: info@allincluded.nl

Italy: italia@boats4people.org

Others: contact@boats4people.org



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