

YEAR 2022

MONITORING
THE RIGHT
TO LIFE

CA MINANDO
FRONTERAS

Monitoring the Right to Life 2022

This report presents data on the victims of the necropolitics applied to border control at the Western Euro-African border during 2022. These data have been confirmed by the Human Rights Observatory run by the Ca-minando Fronteras collective.

This report was drawn up using data from the Observatory of the Western Euro-African Border founded by the Ca-minando Fronteras collective in 2015, which records victims migrating on Mediterranean (Strait of Gibraltar, Alborán Sea, Algeria) and Atlantic (Canary Islands) sea routes, as well as on overland routes via the border fences in Ceuta and Melilla.

Loss of life on migration routes has become normalised in the discourse of migration control, resulting in a rise in the number of victims and the use of increasingly deadly repression against migrant communities. Since 2021, when the shock doctrine was applied and migration routes shifted towards the Atlantic, the number of victims has risen steadily to exceed the total for 2020.

During the first half of 2022 covered in this report, there has been an escalation in the militarisation of migration control, with measures that represent a systematic attack on migrants' human rights.

The most prominent example of escalating violence at the border occurred on 24 June, when migrants were slaughtered at the Melilla-Nador border.¹

In the last six months of the year, we observed a percentage increase in the number of victims compared to the number of departures. During this period, the Algerian route remained both the most active and the most lacking when it comes to structures to protect the right to life.

In the report, we also considered it important to analyse the tools used to exert systematic violence against migrant communities. We have attempted to lay the foundations for an analysis of the situation at the border over the last six months that will focus on human rights and counter belligerent narratives and warmongering fervour. It is crucial that we analyse the violence suffered by migrant communities on a daily basis, the sources of this violence and its impact on migrants' lives, many of which are cut short after sustained rights violations.

The numbers and stories presented in this report play an essential role as we strive for greater respect for the rights of victims and their families. Their memory must remain with us, lighting the way to truth, justice and reparation and ensuring that these deaths cease once and for all.

¹The incident was one of the deadliest ever to take place at the land border separating Spain and Morocco. At least 40 people lost their lives, dozens went missing and hundreds were injured in an operation coordinated by Spanish and Moroccan police forces.

TOTAL NUMBER OF VICTIMS



Every one of the victims represented in this infographic has a story, a family and a community. Their hopes, dreams, desires and enthusiasm for life have all been cut tragically short.

Each individual leaves a void behind them in their communities and family networks, but collectively, this loss of life also has a major impact on their places of origin and on the countries where they died. These are no isolated cases; this is a series of deaths all caused by the policies applied to certain groups of migrants.

“She was coming for treatment. Poor her, she left to get away from that man but she was already sick. She said that if she was cured, she’d help us a lot. She was heading for France. Where did you say the accident was? In the ocean off Abidjan? It’s very dangerous there. I’ll call you to see if there’s any news. Now I’ll have to tell mum”, sister of a woman from Ivory Coast.

"He set off with some other young people from the village. They all left, they couldn't make a living here anymore. I didn't know he'd leave. This is a very small village. They all set off on the same boat. We searched for them, but they didn't show up. Our young people are gone. Some parents have held ceremonies and started mourning. I can't bring myself to do that yet, I want to wait", father of a young Malian man.

WOMEN AND CHILD VICTIMS



Women's bodies are at particular risk because sexual violence is a common phenomenon on migration routes. Women may suffer this form of violence at the hands of fellow migrants or of members of the societies they move through en route. However, the most important development in recent years is the use of sexual violence in migration control, where it has become a tool used by the institutions to inflict pain and punishment on women who migrate.

“She’s dead. She had HIV but she didn’t start treatment until very late on. She’d been through a lot of violence, like other women, like me and I’m a community worker. None of us can escape from it. She tried to cross twice and she saw two sisters die on one attempt. But when they arrest you after you’ve tried to cross the sea and dump you in the desert or in the south and they rape you over and over... Although we do a lot to raise awareness, women are unable to protect themselves in these conditions. Many women are dying like this. They survive the ocean, but they die later from all the pain they’ve been accumulating for years. May she rest in peace”, friend of one of the victims.

Women and child migrants experience different forms of violence, which intersect in family units. For most mothers, losing their children along the way is one of their greatest fears when it comes to migration.

Hundreds of children are already familiar with the pain and repression inflicted by migration control measures. Adolescents are stigmatised, criminalised, singled out and violated. Children are subjected to repression and violence under necropolitical policies. They are stigmatised by being labelled as migrants, negating their rights as children and adolescents.

Many are referred to as ‘MENA’ (unaccompanied foreign minors in Spanish) in public discourse, distancing them still further from their status as children. Meanwhile, younger children run the risk of becoming separated from their families due to the institutional racism present in border control.

“I couldn’t make the crossing with her, they separated us right there on the beach at night. It was like they’d torn part of me away. She reached the Canary Islands in one piece. I did everything I could to make the crossing, no matter what it took. I risked my life because without her I’m nothing. Six months later, I arrived at the same place. I thought it would be easy to hold her in my arms, but it wasn’t. She’s my daughter, my daughter. I did everything they told me to, everything, papers, DNA. Sometimes I didn’t understand them but I did it anyway. I had to ask an organisation for help because they didn’t listen to me. Someone to defend my rights and listen to me. I couldn’t sleep, I couldn’t eat. I called the organisation every day. Months later, I was able to hug her again. It was terrible. I’m sure they wouldn’t have given her back to me without that support. I’m certain it’s because of all the racism that they look at us with suspicion, they punish us, they think we’re bad mothers. But that’s a lie – how many mothers would make the sacrifices I’ve made for my daughter? Those women at the centres for minors aren’t better mothers than I am, but they’re definitely more racist than me”, declared a woman who had become separated from her family.

“We set off from Douala together. We did everything together, like a family. Our mothers are very poor and since we were little, we sold products in the streets to get a bit of money to survive on. One day, we left for the sake of our families. Our aim was to work wherever we could and to beg when we couldn’t find work. There’s a lot of work in the fish factories and we worked there day and night. We sent some of the money to our families and saved the rest for the crossing. The day arrived and we set off. The dinghy stopped and we called for help for hours. It was sinking. I lost her in the middle of the night, she sank to the bottom and I couldn’t do anything to help. I still haven’t told her family. I can’t bring myself to do it. How old am I? We’re both 15. We were born a month apart”, eexplained a friend of one of the victims at the border.

“Her? She was from Ivory Coast. She set off from Tarfaya towards Cape Bojador and Dakhla, but she suddenly stopped contacting us. After Cape Bojador, there’s a police checkpoint. The officers made her get off the bus to Dakhla and released her after she had been through the checkpoint, but we never heard from her again. We don’t know what’s happened to her, it was more than a month ago”, said a relative of a woman who went missing on the overland route.

NUMBER OF VICTIMS BY MONTH



Horribly, not a month goes by without a death and six people died each day in 2022. The border is merciless and danger is always present. When people move, their right to life is placed in jeopardy. January was the deadliest month, followed by June and October.

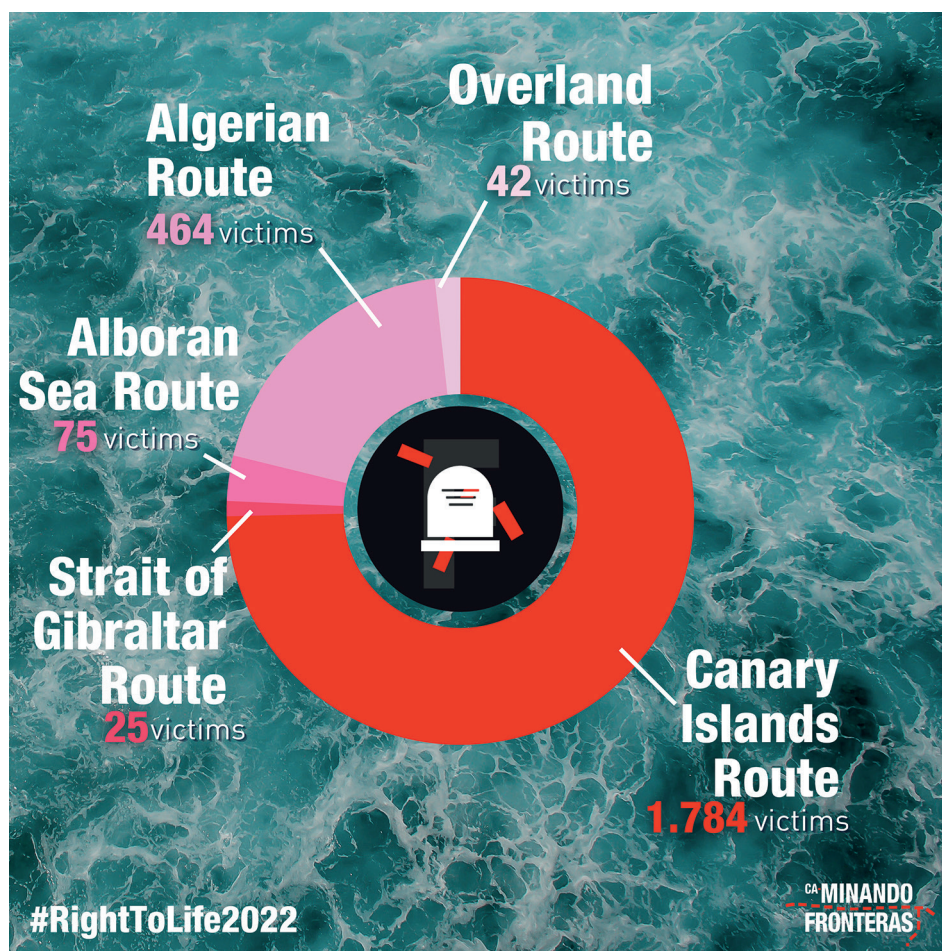
“In the first few days of January, more than 300 people went missing. You can look on Facebook at the Algerian family groups. We don’t know where lots of the people are, but they set off from the Oran region and their families are looking for them. A lot of boats arrived around that time but others still haven’t appeared. We don’t know if they’re dead or alive, or if they’ve been locked up. We don’t know how many people there are, it’s hard to know. It’s important that we have all the information we need to look for them”, explained an Algerian community leader.

“I’m looking for my brother, he’s from Democratic Republic of Congo. He was travelling with another Congolese woman and her seven-year-old son. Please help us. They left Tan Tan on 6 December, there were 56 people in total. Please tell us if you have any new information, even if they find the bodies. Look, this was his hairstyle. The three of them were travelling together on the boat”, esaid the brother of a victim at the border.

“I’m looking for my brother M.D., he’s from Senegal. I need help, please. He disappeared many days ago. He was travelling with 55 other people. He set off from Tan Tan but it’s been too long, they should have arrived by now. It doesn’t take this long, even if there are problems on the way. My wife and mother have been so worried they haven’t been able to sleep for ages. Me... I haven’t slept for five days, my mind is all over the place. I think they should have arrived by now. I’ve been on the water myself. Remember, there are very young people, women, little children, people aged 15, 17, 22, 30 years old. Their families are all worried, every one of them had their own life before they set off. They can’t be left out there at sea.

There are rumours that there are three survivors being treated at Tan Tan hospital, but I don’t know if that’s true. We need your help to find them, so many days have passed. It’s been too long and we still haven’t heard from them”, lamented the brother of a victim at the border.

VICTIMS BY SEA ROUTE



The Atlantic route continues to be the most deadly. The physical characteristics of the route, the use of boats that are too flimsy for the ocean, the long distances and the political relations between countries in the region that are driven by territorial interests on land and at sea hinder international collaboration to defend the right to life and lead to delays in mobilising rescue services.

“At 4:00 am, some relatives alerted us to a rubber dinghy carrying 53 people, which had left Tarfaya around four hours earlier. When we managed to make contact with the boat, there were already people in the water. We conveyed the information to the rescue services, which already had a position as they had been alerted hours earlier. The relatives called us because the rescue services hadn’t taken action and the people were still in danger. That’s when we found out that Rabat was responsible for coordinating the rescue. Hours

went by without a response until the Moroccan authorities told us at 15:00 that the dinghy had been located but that they had only found 10 people alive, including six women, and that two corpses had been retrieved from the sea. The others had fallen victim to a tragedy that could have been avoided if the rescue services had mobilised more quickly and if they had been coordinated both on land and by air. This was an avoidable tragedy because they had the boat's position and information on the danger it was in.", account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

"On 7 December, our organisation received an alert from a boat carrying 56 people, including five women and three babies. We informed the Spanish and Moroccan authorities. The people on the vessel managed to call us on the phone, telling us their position and explaining that they were in danger. On the afternoon of 8 December, we received a final call from the vessel asking for an urgent rescue. After that, the telephone number stopped working. It took a whole day for the search operation to be mobilised, despite the vessel's exact location being known. When the search began, the resources used were inadequate. Those 56 people are among the victims documented by our organisation and their families continue to search in hope of finding them. They need to know the truth and ascertain who is responsible for this entirely avoidable tragedy", account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

"On 24 September, a vessel carrying 34 people, including two women, set off from Lamsid to the south of Laayoune. At that time, the tropical cyclone Hermine was crossing the Atlantic. The inflatable boat was missing for days before it was spotted by a cargo ship on 1 October 278 km south of Gran Canaria. In it, there were four corpses and a man who was still alive, who was taken to hospital in Las Palmas. His family contacted our organisation and we were able to confirm that the survivor was indeed the person they were looking for. Several days later, his mother was able to speak to her son on the phone. Her 'nightmare', as she described it, had come to an end. For the other families, this marked the start of the mourning process as the survivor confirmed that the other people on the boat had died when the cyclone reached them on their way to the Canary Islands", account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

The Alborán Sea and the Strait of Gibraltar are less commonly used routes but migrants travelling on them are at constant risk due to failure to render assistance at sea. Rescue services are not mobilised or are mobilised too late after being alerted to vessels in distress.

“In the early hours of 8 January, 28 people set off on a rubber dinghy from Dar El Kebdani. They lost contact with their families at 8:00 UTC. It wasn’t until midday that our organisation received the warning and we immediately conveyed it to MRCC and Salvamento Marítimo. During successive calls to Salvamento Marítimo, we were repeatedly asked to provide the details of the boat that we had already reported in previous calls. It is unclear what search measures were taken that evening, but we know for a fact that no specific action was taken to search for those people throughout the whole of that day. During the night, the boat called 112 for help and resources were mobilised in the early hours. At that time, Salvamento Marítimo called our organisation again to ask for the details of the boat, which we had given them the previous morning in every call we made to them. A lifeboat and an air resource were then mobilised, but it was too late.

Several days later, five bodies washed up: four women and a man. Our pre-identification suggested that they had been travelling on the boat that the authorities had been alerted about on the 8th. At that point, the families were informed and the Spanish authorities were contacted to ensure that the people would be buried in accordance with their Islamic religion”, account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

“In the early hours of 13 August, three young men set off from Kariat on a jet ski. Their families alerted us that afternoon. They said that three more jet skis had set off from the same place but they did not know how many people were on board. We called Salvamento Marítimo in Almería, who told us that two people had arrived. We were not told whether a search operation had been mobilised. The next day, another jet ski carrying three people was rescued. We provided the name of the boy K.B., whose family had authorised us to search for him. Despite this, neither we nor his family received any confirmation that he had arrived. Since then, K.B. and his two companions remain missing”, account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

“On 21 October, we informed Salvamento Marítimo that a vessel carrying 13 people, including three women, had set off from Nador that same day after their families contacted us. That afternoon, the news that two vessels carrying 12 and 13 people had been rescued in the area was posted on Salvamento Marítimo’s social media accounts. We called to ask if there were any women among those rescued in order to ascertain whether the boat that we had been informed of was among the two vessels. The answer was negative and we were referred to the National Police and an organisation with limited working hours that is unable to respond to emergencies.

On 23 October, we received a telephone call from Salvamento Marítimo asking for more information about the boat. We asked whether it was possible that it was among the boats rescued but we were told that they were unable to provide information about rescues due to the confidentiality agreements in place. The 13 people travelling on the boat are still missing today, account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

The Algerian route is completely overlooked and failure to render assistance is one of the most serious problems facing the people travelling on this route. This is particularly apparent in the Balearic Islands area, where the journey is much longer.

“On 11 May, the families of the people travelling on a boat that left Mers el Hadjadj in Oran alerted our organisation. There were nine men and two women on board, one of whom was pregnant. They hadn’t been able to contact their families since they left on 7 May. We conveyed the information to the Rescue Coordination Centres in Cartagena and Almería. They asked us for the most recent information and we sent them the telephone numbers of those on board. When we contacted them on subsequent days, they told us that they had no record of an arrival of that description and we do not know if they mobilised specific search and rescue resources.

On 14 May, a navy boat rescued several people but it was unclear how many or whether any further information was available. They advised us to call the main phone number for the Guardia Civil or Cruz Roja Almería. With help from Cruz Roja Almería, we were able to confirm that only three men had been found from the boat that had set off on 7 May. The bodies of the two women and the other six men remain missing to this day, account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

“My friend’s son set off on 9 November. Look at the phone, it says he received a message on 10 November. We haven’t heard from him since. Look, I’ll send you some photos of him. There are a few videos too. He left Boumèrdes with 20 other people in the early hours of 9 November. There were another eight young sub-Saharan Africans and 12 Algerians. They’ve been told that they arrived, but they haven’t been able to reach him. I don’t believe it, people are saying all kinds of things. But his family... His father, his brother call me all the time, several times a day, to ask if any boats have arrived, but it’s been too long now, hasn’t it? It’s been a month and 20 days. Something must have happened, explained a community leader responsible for the search for a missing person.

“On 7 December, 14 people set off from Algiers with the aim of reaching the Balearic Islands. Among them, there were two women and a baby. Their families contacted us to raise the alarm on the afternoon of 9 December. When we informed Salvamento Marítimo, they told us that the Algerian maritime rescue service had already alerted them. On 15 December, other relatives contacted us to express their concern for their loved ones. They had reported them missing but no information was forthcoming as to whether or not a search and rescue operation had been launched to look for the 14 people on the boat. To this day, they remain missing”, account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

PERCENTAGE OF MISSING PEOPLE



Most of the migrants who fall victim to the sea routes disappear without a trace and their families never receive a body to allow them to confirm the death. As a result, families and communities experience a phenomenon known as ‘ambiguous loss’², which has multiple legal and psychosocial impacts.

“On 11 May, 14 women, six children and 39 men set off from Guelmin at 2:00 on board a rubber dinghy. For three days, we maintained contact with the rescue services to provide them with the telephone numbers of those on board. We do not know whether specific search and rescue resources were mobilised for this vessel. On 15 May, the people on the boat made contact with us, explaining that they were off Tarfaya and that several people had already died. They confirmed that MRCC was coordinating the search and rescue operation. Communication with the boat was smooth as it was in an area with good signal, although they were unable to send their position. They told us that people were dying of thirst because they had been adrift for

²Ambiguous loss occurs in circumstances where people are unable to find out what happened to their loved one and obtain closure, prolonging their suffering and hindering the grieving process. It can be psychological (e.g. when people are suffering from cognitive decline or neurodegenerative diseases) or physical, as in the case of deaths and disappearances at the border.

several days. The night before, the boat had overturned and several people had died. At 18:30 UTC, the rescue of 46 people, including 10 women and two children, was confirmed. Two corpses were also retrieved. The bodies of 11 people remained at sea. In subsequent calls from distressed relatives, one said desperately that if they at least had a body, they could confirm the death and begin mourning”, account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

“We set off from Mohammedia three days ago. The day before yesterday, we lost the engine so we tried to head back to the coast. When the engine fell into the sea, Z fell in too. He tried to hold onto a barrel and swim, but we lost sight of him. We haven’t heard from him since. Yesterday, another man died in the water. We were sinking, we were all in the water, we could see a ship.

Us survivors are alright, but you must call Z’s wife and tell her what’s happened. I’ve tried to explain it to her but she doesn’t believe that Z died in the water. She thinks her husband might have swum back to shore, but it’s very unlikely. You need to explain to her. Please speak to the family in Cameroon too, here’s his sister’s phone number”, said one of the survivors of the shipwreck.

MISSING BOATS



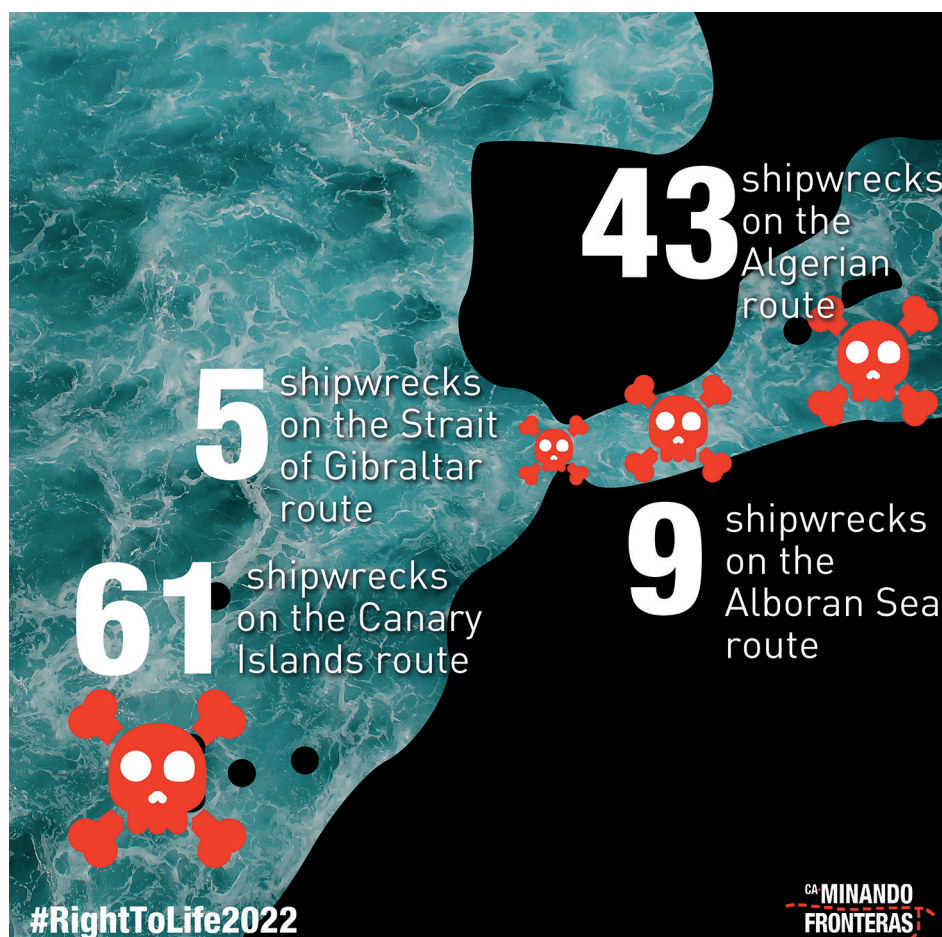
When a boat disappears along with everyone on board, it is much more difficult to obtain an account of what happened and the situation is still more distressing for the families of those travelling on the vessel. There are no survivors to provide the information that is often key in allowing families to mourn even when they do not have their loved one's body.

“68 people, including 30 women – two of whom were pregnant – and nine children, sent their position from their wooden boat on the morning of 10 January, calling for assistance. This information was conveyed to the rescue services and the MRCC took charge of coordinating the operation. Twenty-four hours after calling for help, Rabat informed us that they had received a new position for the vessel; we did not manage to make contact with the boat. The next day, Rabat claimed to have sent a patrol to the area from which the positions had been sent but they had found nothing. At that point, the search for the boat ceased. The 68 people on board are still missing”, account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

“On 10 August 2022, 62 people set off from Tan Tan, including 10 women and four children. Around that time, there were other inflatable boats in the area but those 62 people could not be found.

Many families contacted our organisation, worried that they had heard nothing from their loved ones. Nineteen families sent us photos of their missing relatives in the hope of finding them or at least recovering their bodies. We received messages from Senegal, Germany, Tunisia, Guinea, Morocco, Spain, Comoros, Ivory Coast and France. To this day, all we can tell them is that their loved ones are still missing”, account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

TOTAL NUMBER OF SHIPWRECKS



This is the total number of shipwrecks documented by our collective for the period in question. Each of them has been reconstructed to produce an account explaining the causes of the shipwreck to the victims’ families and to cast light on the stories of both victims and survivors. We also analysed the

factors that caused these tragedies in 2022, either individually or collectively, and these are listed below.

- Search and rescue operations were not mobilised. This occurs in the Alborán Sea, in the Balearic Island area and in the rescues in the Atlantic region coordinated by the MRCC in Rabat.
- Search and rescue operations were not launched quickly enough despite the location of the unfolding tragedy being known.
- Inadequate search and rescue resources were mobilised: insufficient sea resources and lack of air resources, which play an important role in searching for vessels.
- Negligence from the Spanish rescue services.
- No air resources were mobilised despite there being people in the water.
- Lack of information and transparency due to military operations by US and Moroccan military forces taking place in the region.
- Delays in exchanging information between Salvamento Marítimo and MRCC Rabat.
- Lack of effective coordination between the two countries' rescue services.
- Incorrect information provided to the rescue services, which hindered the search operation.
- Our organisation struggled to communicate with the rescue services; they did not respond to our alerts and ignored our warnings that the vessel was in danger. This occurred primarily with Salvamento Marítimo workers; the relationship with the control towers in Almería and the Balearic Islands proved especially difficult.
- Lack of coordination between Morocco and the Spanish rescue services to save lives. Spain does not mobilise rescue services, despite being aware that Morocco is effectively failing to render assistance at sea. This also happens in waters where the Spanish State is responsible for search and rescue operations, especially the area between Laayoune and Dakhla.
- Large distances with insufficient resources available to cover them.
- Off-course vessels.
- Overloaded vessels.
- Vessels that set off amid difficult terrain and were shipwrecked upon departure.
- Panic and distress among people travelling on the boats, causing them to capsize; crew members desperately jumping into the sea in fear and losing their lives.

- Hastiness on the part of a freighter that carried out a rescue without fulfilling the necessary conditions. It is unclear why the freighter embarked on this rescue.
- Failure to render assistance at sea by fishing boats due to fear of criminalisation.
- No active searches for corpses were carried out after the tragedy.
- Survivors of tragedies suffered torture and inhuman or degrading treatment after reaching land.

VICTIMS OF THE BORDER FENCES



On 24 June, 40 people lost their lives at the border fence in Melilla. This fateful date brings to mind the victims who died at the fences in 2005, who were targeted using terrible deterrents, including firearms. The images also evoke the victims of Tarajal in 2014.

These tragic events are the product of the implementation of the renewed security cooperation agreement between Spain and Morocco.

“That’s when we began to fall. Everyone began to fall, one after another. The police climbed up to the top and made us come down, then they caught us. They shot at some of us. Lots of people died. They threw us to the ground, hit us, sprayed tear gas in our faces. They did all that until... If you cried, they carried on beating you. But if you played dead, they left you alone. But if you cried, they kept going”, a victim of the slaughter described.

“They beat us even when we were lying on the ground. We had no strength, we were completely exhausted”, said another victim.

“I was in shock, they beat me badly. I can’t remember much right now. They hit my brother on the head, they hit me on the head and on the abdomen. They were wearing very, very big shoes to hit me, to hit us. Many, many people were on the ground. It was really tough. Many, many people died. Many, many people. Even my brother who saved me. I haven’t seen him since. They gave me this really big [wound] before taking me to be transported to Oujda. The police beat us and told us we were dogs and we were stupid”, a victim of the slaughter declared.

“The auxiliary forces beat me with a truncheon and called me a dirty nigger. They trampled me with their boots and I felt my bones break. I saw the bodies of the people who died. There were about 30 of them. They called an ambulance to take us away and the bodies were put in the same ambulance. We arrived at the hospital and they left us all on the floor, both the dead and the injured. My friend spent four days in a coma before waking up. He was hit in the head with a bullet. The soldiers killed us, I saw it with my own eyes. I’m alive. God kept me alive, but I’ve lost five friends. I saw them die with my own eyes”, explained another victim.

NATIONALITIES



The victims' countries of origin cast light on their migration history and the reasons prompting them to leave. They also allow us to analyse migration routes and the impact of the violence suffered by migrants. The contexts and communities where migrants originate enable us to develop a narrative centring on their status as individuals.

The reasons prompting migrants to leave were:

- Armed conflict posing a serious threat to life: political persecution, forced migration, armed violence, etc.
- Neocolonial extractivist policies.
- Poverty exacerbated by climate change.
- Poverty exacerbated by rising prices and shortages of basic foodstuffs such as cereals.

- Poverty exacerbated by lack of work and absence of material conditions for making a living; lack of appealing or desirable future prospects.
- Gender-based violence.
- Violence against LGBTBI+ groups.
- Human rights activists fleeing after fighting for access to social rights and greater democracy and/or against corruption.

The Western Euro-African border: a battlefield

Throughout the last year, we have documented the violence suffered by people during their migration journeys in what constitutes a sustained attack on their human rights.

Externalisation / Militarisation

Relations between countries are shaped by processes of border externalisation linked to migration control. Throughout the year, militarisation has been driven by the new agreement between the Spanish State and Morocco, which is based on exchanging recognition of territorial interests and funds for measures to block and repress people on the move.

The following tools are used to exert violence at externalised borders:

1. Systematic illegal and/or arbitrary detentions:

- Use of premises belonging to public institutions that are not linked to the Ministry of Interior for forced detentions. These centres are not subject to judicial scrutiny and detainees find themselves in a state of administrative vulnerability. They have no legal representation and social organisations have limited access to them to provide humanitarian support.
- Detentions without administrative procedures or safeguards. In recent months, mass arrests overseen by the Moroccan authorities at the Ministry of Interior have proliferated across the country. The concept of the 'border city' has expanded and migrants are being more persecuted in inland areas.

- Involvement of institutions not related to immigration in detentions and migration control. Over the course of the year, we have detected a rise in social centres and schools being used as spaces for detaining migrants. Meanwhile, public employees in settings such as hospitals, schools and family courts help identify migrants and play a role in repressive migration control measures.

2. Systematic use of force:

- During detentions, controls and operations on beaches and at border fences, the use of force by state security forces has risen exponentially and migrants are viewed as a threat rather than as individuals with rights. Anti-riot equipment and even firearms have been used.

“When we reached the shore, we saw a convoy of soldiers on motorbikes. They initially tried to stop us from getting onto the boat, but then they said ‘go on, try and get on’. We boarded and when we were about to head out to sea, they charged. My friend, who was next to me, was hit by a bullet that made a hole in the inflatable boat. I was shot twice, once in the thigh and again in the back. We’d never seen anything like it, soldiers firing real bullets at passengers.

We had to turn back and when I got out of the boat, I saw a woman stretched out on the sand. She’d been shot in the chest. There was blood everywhere. I called the soldiers and begged them to stop shooting. They hit me twice. Then the police came, but the woman was already dead when they arrived”, explained a man from Ivory Coast who survived the attack at Akhfennir.

- Violability of the home. Migrants have been detained by force in their own homes by security forces that have broken down doors in order to enter. These detentions sometimes take place at night. Not only are people attacked, but their belongings are often stolen.
- Injuries caused by police raids. During detentions, people may be injured even when they do not resist. Most harm is caused by fractures, as beating migrants until their bones break and they are unable to flee is a systematic practice.
- Raids on informal settlements. Raids of this kind are particularly violent, with military forces blocking access to food and water as a form of torture. The security forces are accompanied by local criminal groups, which steal the rest of the migrants’ belongings and raze the camps to the ground once the soldiers have left with the detained migrants.

“First, when they tried to attack us, we had to move somewhere else because we didn’t want to fight with them. They fired a lot of tear gas at us and we left. We thought it would be better to change places, so we moved closer to the border. On the morning of Thursday 23 June, while we were cooking, they fired gas at us. More than 300 (soldiers) came again. We tried to run away but there were too many of them. We tried to protect ourselves because they were firing at lots of people, they wounded a lot of people up on the mountain too”, explained a victim of the slaughter.

3. Racial discrimination:

- Black people are stopped even if they have documents accrediting their residency in the country. In recent months, asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers have suffered detentions due to their skin colour and/or place of origin. Their rights have been violated and Morocco has breached the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families under the migration control agreement signed with the Spanish State. On 13 February, we were saddened to hear of the death of J. B. from Cameroon, who lost his life during a forced relocation to the south of the country after one of these racial detentions.

4. Forced relocations and collective expulsions:

- Once they have been detained, migrants are often relocated to cities such as Beni Mellal, Taza, Agadir and Casablanca, which act as a stopper preventing people from leaving again. Many people arrive in these cities with injuries and healthcare organisations and services are unable to provide an adequate response to this appalling humanitarian situation.
- Collective expulsions to the Algerian border. In these collective expulsions, detained migrants (including men, women and adolescents) are sent to the city of Oujda. This is particularly dangerous as the conflict between Morocco and Algeria is becoming increasingly violent and migrants find themselves stuck and their rights violated by both countries. Migration has also become a tool for negotiating and exerting pressure in the territorial conflict between the two countries. During the last six months, at least four people, including a teenager, have disappeared following a collective expulsion to the eastern border.

“On 20 September, after two days at sea, our organisation received a call from an inflatable boat carrying 51 people. They told us that

they were next to a Moroccan fishing boat and urgently needed to be rescued. We immediately conveyed the information to the Moroccan and Spanish authorities. In the end, the fishing boat rescued the 51 people and took them to Tan Tan. When they arrived, they were detained. There were eight women and a young girl among them. Forty of them, including two women and a young girl, were deported to Zagora in the desert", account from the Ca-minando Fronteras helpline.

5. Specific violence against migrant women and children:

- Sexual violence. This form of violence is used by the security forces during raids, especially those targeting camps. Another way of punishing women that has been documented this year is to expose their naked bodies to everyone present during raids.
- Separation from children. During detentions, raids, forced relocations and collective expulsions, separations have been documented as repression is used to target family units.
- Child and adolescent migrants experience the same violence, violating their best interests. Meanwhile, adolescents are subjected to the same controls, repressive measures and violence as adults. Children aged under 11 years old can fall victim to direct violence or witness the repression waged against their mothers and other members of the migrant community.
- Sexual and reproductive health. Systematic sexual violence affects women's health, exposing them to sexually transmitted diseases. Continuous violence forces them to move constantly, which prevents them from taking the treatment they need when they contract diseases as a consequence of this form of repression targeting migrants.

6. Legal defencelessness:

- There are no legal procedures to safeguard migrants or instruments to protect victims of violence. With no legal defence, not even the international conventions signed by Morocco apply to migrants. In addition, migrants have been unable to report the abuse they have suffered as they risk being subjected to further repression. The right to legal certainty is de facto violated.
- There is no reparation of damages. The impact of these different layers of violence affects migrants' physical and mental integrity but there are no safe spaces for migrants in Morocco. Some associations provide support to alleviate the effects of the repression, but this is entirely inadequate compared to the scale of the harm suffered.

7. Persecution of individuals defending migrant rights:

- Recounting violence and calling for truth, justice, reparation and a commitment to ending these practices carry significant costs for migrant communities. Community leaders are subjected to surveillance, challenged for defending migrants' rights and repressed to prevent them from continuing with this work. The militarisation that has occurred this year with the implementation of the agreement between Spain and Morocco has also led to a resurgence in the criminalisation of individuals who condemn violations of migrants' rights.

“I need you to help me. My wife has been in prison for nearly two months. It was during the raids in Nador, the police came and took everyone away. The women who were sleeping in the forest were released quickly, but she was sleeping in a house because she has heart problems... The police came, arrested everyone and put them in prison. That was almost two months ago but I'm far away and I can't do anything to help”, explained the husband of a woman imprisoned after a raid.

Ceuta and Melilla border fences: transnational human rights violations

During attempts to enter Ceuta and Melilla in collective efforts by large groups or by smaller groups of one or two people, the following practices were observed:

- Systematic use of force. Migration control at the border fences in Ceuta and Melilla is based on military practices. The use of tear gas, rubber bullets and real bullets was confirmed.
- Violations of the principle of non-refoulement. Pushbacks were documented in images during attempts to cross the border fences on 2 and 8 March and on 24 June. On the first two occasions, the pushbacks were carried out by Spanish security forces. In the case of the slaughter in Melilla, the pushbacks were conducted in collaboration with the Moroccan security forces, which entered Spanish territory to violently remove the migrants.
- Returns to countries where people are subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. The people pushed back from Spanish territory at the border fences in Ceuta and Melilla were subjected to violence.
- Violations of the right to asylum. Among the people returned to Morocco were migrants from Sudan, South Sudan, Chad and Mali, who may be refugees. Cases of individuals fleeing persecution, such as LGBTQI+ communities, were also confirmed.
- Returns of highly vulnerable people. These included injured people, child migrants and trafficking victims.
- Collective expulsions and forced relocations awaited people who had fallen victim to the violent migration control measures implemented at the border fences in Ceuta and Melilla.

**EVERYONE FOR
THEMSELVES**

**NO ONE LEFT
UNBEHIND**

**DEFEND
YOURSELF NOT
TO DIE**

A REPORT BY:

**CA-MINANDO
FRONTERAS**

WITH THE SUPPORT OF:



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