

They are the sort of deaths which rarely merit more than a passing reference in the mainstream media - a battered ship which sinks in the Mediterranean, a stowaway found dead in the cargo hold of a ship or plane, a nameless asylum seeker who takes his/her life, no longer able to take the pressure in one of the EU's many 'detention centres'. Now and again, as with the 58 Chinese people found dead in the back of a truck in Dover in June of this year, the cases are so horrific that they cannot be ignored. Then they become big news for a day or two only to sink off the political agenda just as quickly.

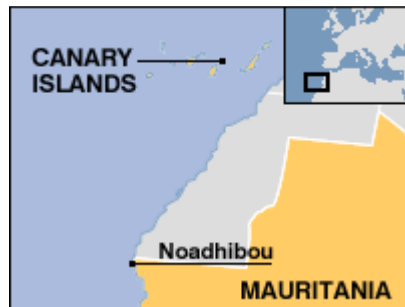
According to the following [press review](#) at least **9,118** people have died since 1988 along the [european frontiers](#). Among them **3,177** were missing in the sea. 6,646 migrants died in the Mediterranean sea, and through the Atlantic Ocean towards Spain, and 1.079 lost their life trying to cross Sahara desert in order to reach Europe [\[read more...\]](#) [\[1988-2007 press review\]](#)

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Dozens drown off Mauritania coast

Forty-five African migrants have drowned trying to reach Europe in separate incidents on Saturday night, the Mauritanian Red Crescent says.



Fortress Europe?

EU paralysis over immigration policies deepens hostility along the policy divide

Patrick Sabatier
YaleGlobal, 11 July 2006

PARIS: Desperate Africans pack into fragile fishing boats, tossed by Atlantic waters off the Canary Islands – since early May those images clash on European television screens with those of African players

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=7657>



Return to sender: New out-of-Africa immigrants to Europe via Canary Islands caught by the Spanish Coast Guard

Europe's working-age population is aging and falling in numbers, and the continent needs workers to do jobs that Europeans either will not or cannot do. Meanwhile, half of Africa's ever-growing population is under 17 years of age, with many living on less than US\$1.20 a day. Such potent conditions are building an immigration crisis in the European Union, the physical evidence of which can be found in the Spanish-owned Canary Islands, where 10,000 Africans have been caught this year after braving the 1,000-kilometer journey from the African Coast. The crisis poses tough political, economic and humanitarian questions for Europe's policymakers. Knowing that a "fortress Europe" would not survive in a globalized economy, politicians must also respond to citizens' concerns that immigrants drain an already-fraying social net or take jobs in countries with high rates of unemployment. Other critics denounce European governments' attempts at selective immigration – welcoming only the most educated or talented – and assert that the only way to stem the tide of illegal immigration is development and aid for Africa. Failing to reach consensus on policies, Europe remains a patchwork of oft-contradictory immigration policies, setting the stage for "further and bigger tragedies." – YaleGlobal

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Canaries migrant death toll soars **Canaries migrant death toll soars**

About 6,000 African migrants have died or gone missing on the sea journey to the Canary Islands in 2006, Spanish immigration officials say.

They say more than 31,000 migrants reached the islands in the Atlantic - more than six times as many as in 2005.

The coastguard intercepted fewer than 5,000 of them in small wooden - and often overcrowded - boats.

The Canaries is one of the most popular destinations for Africans attempting risky sea journeys to reach Europe to escape poverty.



"We're talking about a dramatic number of dead," Froilan Rodriguez, the Canary Islands' deputy director of immigration, told Spain's Cadena Ser radio station.

Mr Rodriguez said that about 600 bodies had been picked up on the shores of the Canaries and the African mainland in the past 12 months, but the total of migrants killed had been about 10 times higher.

Jose Segura, Spain's interior ministry official in the Canaries, said that almost as many Africans had reached the islands in 2006 as in the previous four years combined.

He described the increase in the numbers of the arrivals as "spectacular".

Spain has repeatedly called for more European Union help to deal with the problem, the BBC's Danny Wood in Madrid says.


In a bid to stop this migration, boats, planes and helicopters from the European Union's border control agency are now patrolling the shores of Senegal and Mauritania, our correspondent says.

According to push theory: emigration is a family decision

Fortress Europe is an important blog, a kind of obscene "bodycount" monitoring the scores of African and Asiatic refugees dead on the seas and shores of Europe, leaving their homes and families chasing a dream, a work and a future. For many centuries European colonized the world and plundered and sacked other cultures wealth and people. The slavery was an European way to make people into commodities. The African seeking a place in Europe are the descents of the people whose blood and sweat builded Europe's wellbeing.

In 2001 a special UN General Assembly Resolution was adopted to declare the former African Refugee Day as the International Refugee Day as an expression of solidarity with Africa, which hosts the most refugees. The General Assembly noted that 2001 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had agreed to have the International Refugee Day coincide with African Refugee Day on 20 June. UNITED coordinates an annual campaign around this date. This campaign aims to highlight the issues of refugees from a non-governmental perspective on all levels - local, national and European. We call upon all organisations to take part in the campaign.

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A migrant's journey to Europe

Morgan is one of the thousands of African people who have made the perilous journey to the Canary Islands in an open fishing boat.

He was caught and deported back to Nigeria but he hasn't given up hope of getting to Europe.

Morgan got in touch with the BBC by e-mail from Morocco, and this is the story he told:

“ My name is Morgan, I'm 30 years old. I tried to get to the Canary Islands once before but didn't make it, I'm on my way back to try a second time.



Over 19,000 migrants have arrived on the Canary Islands this year

The boat I was on was intercepted by the Spanish police as we reached land. I was put in detention and then deported back to Nigeria.

That journey was quite possibly the most frightening experience of my life and had we not been picked up by the authorities, we would all have died.

Despite this, I am on my way back, to try again, a second time.

'Fear for family'

Life in Nigeria is hard. There is such poverty. There are no jobs, there's no food and there is corruption. I can't say too much about the situation as I fear for the lives of my family, the ones I've left behind.

My father died when I was young, life for my family has been difficult ever since, I don't remember a time when we didn't struggle to eat.

“ Lots of us were vomiting and one girl, who had been seriously vomiting, died - I can't say what happened to her body ”

I have to try and make a better life for myself and it will enable me to send money back for my family.

I left Benin City in Nigeria on 11 January 1998 and began my journey. I travelled overland through Nigeria, Niger republic, Libya, Algeria and into Morocco.

[Click here to see the routes taken by Morgan.](#)

I worked wherever I could, selling goods and working as a barber. I was caught by police on various occasions. On the border of Morocco, they beat me so badly that my legs were dislocated.

A friend of mine told me we should go to the western side of Morocco where we could meet someone who would help us get to the Canary Islands. As soon as my legs were better, we went.

'Boat journey'

I gave a man 300 euros. He took me out into the open desert where there were more than 70 other Africans waiting to go. We entered the boat on 7 August 2002. There were three boats, each boat carried around 25 people.

As the boat moved off, we began singing gospel music to keep our spirits up. It helped us not to think about the danger. After many hours, lots of us, including myself, were vomiting. One girl who had been seriously vomiting died. I can't say what happened to her body. I try never to think about it. I'm also afraid for my safety.



Migrants travel for hours from the African coast

After many hours of this, a big wave came and covered the boat. Everyone was shouting, water was pouring into the boat. I thought we were dead. We were all crying, we had no idea which direction we were going in or which direction we had come from. Everyone was panicking but then the engine suddenly started again.

We all worked hard to bail out the water and we continued the journey. We were at sea for another three or four hours. I remember thinking it felt like the ocean kept opening up, swallowing our boat and spitting it back out again.

'Rescued'

We were rescued by the police as we neared the coastline. Moments after they picked us all up, our boat broke in two. If we had not been rescued, we would certainly have died at sea.

The other two boats disappeared. To this day I don't know

what happened to them. I was in detention on the island for many days but we heard nothing.

Back in Nigeria, the situation was even worse. I started trying to save money again, I met a friend who had some money and we agreed to try and make the journey again.

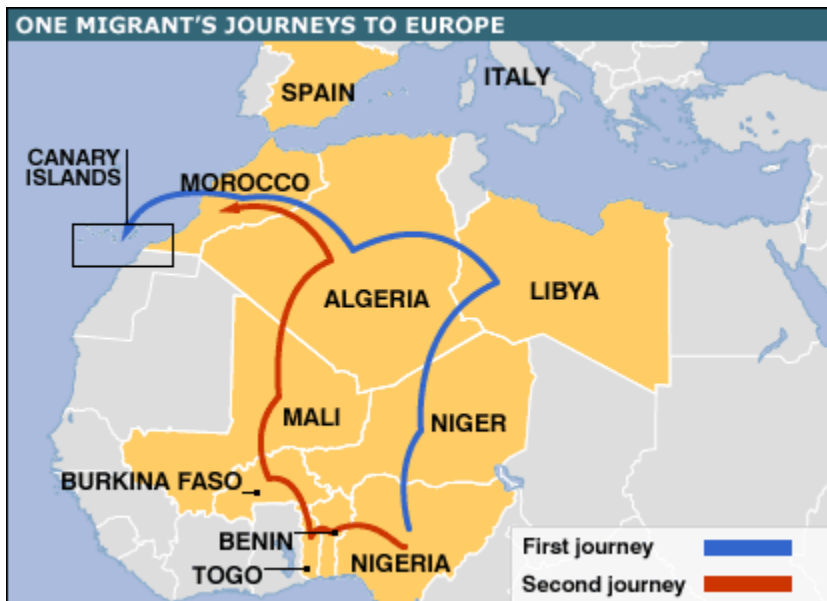
“ I am afraid of making the journey again, but there is no other way. ”

We went from Nigeria to Benin, through Togo and Burkina Faso and into Mali. There we paid a truck driver to take us to Morocco but he dropped us in the middle of the desert in Algeria. We were left there for two days with no water. Some people died, including my friend and travel companion, John.

Luckily for us, the authorities rescued us again. It was the Algerian police this time, they found us in the desert and sent us back to Mali. That saved my life.

I gathered together as much money as I could and started out again. I'm back on the road now working where possible and trying to save enough money to take the boat again.

I am, of course, very afraid of making this boat journey again but there is no other way. I and other Africans like myself feel we have no choice. I have to try and make a better life, I pray that God will see me through.



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Mother's battle against Senegal migration

By Tidiane Sy
BBC News, Dakar

Yayi Bayam Diouf says that for the past two months, she has managed to prevent any boats leaving her home area in Senegal, loaded with migrants trying to reach Spain's Canary Islands - making her campaign more effective than all the warships and planes sent to the Atlantic Ocean by the European Union.

"Every morning I go to the seaside, I call many young fishermen and I start speaking to them," she says.

She started her campaign after her only son drowned trying to reach the Canary Islands.

"He died in the sea with 81 young people who were all fishermen and all from our village."



Yayi Bayam Diouf runs her campaign from a room in her house

She lives in Thiaroye, a poor suburb of 45,000 people on the outskirts of the Senegalese capital, Dakar, which used to be a traditional fishermen's village.

In the past few months, Thiaroye has evolved from dire anonymity to world fame, hitting newspaper headlines around the globe.

The suburb had become one of the major launch-pads for thousands of young West Africans trying to reach Europe in small fishing boats.

Scarce fish

Mrs Diouf says poverty resulting from the declining fish stocks is the major reason why young people are prepared to risk drowning in the Atlantic Ocean to reach Europe.

Many locals blame the scarcity of fish on overfishing by

massive European trawlers - they say they cannot compete in their traditional wooden vessels.

"From our forefathers, all our families are fishermen. The men used to go and fish, the women used to buy and sell their products," says Mrs Diouf.

Following the death of hundreds of youths from the area, the local women's development group she heads has switched its focus to migration.



“ If most of us are trying to leave this country, it's because we have no opportunities here ”

Malick Sall

One small room in a corner of her house serves as the association headquarters.

Posters and pictures of recent activities related to the campaign are hanging on the walls of the small office, equipped with one computer and two tiny desks.

The association's lack of resources only mirrors the lack of resources for the community as a whole.

"The equipment and motors used in the fishing boats have become too old," and the community cannot afford to replace them, Mrs Diouf says.

"So when the 'passeurs' [traffickers who organise the trips] came here to offer the opportunity to travel, the young people who knew the sea were tempted and they all signed up."

Although Mrs Diouf says the boats no longer leave Thiaroye, local young people are as keen as ever to seek their fortunes in Europe, despite the risks.



The boats are filled out of sight of the shore

Determined

"If today, as we speak, I see a boat going, I would be among the volunteers, let alone tomorrow," said Malick Sall, a young

electrician in his mid-twenties.

"If most of us are trying to leave this country, it's because we have no opportunities here," he said, blaming the "government for not helping the youth at all".

In the same overcrowded compound, where people and cattle live together and which also hosts a carpenter's workshop, Mbaye Diop Faye spends his time feeding and taking care of two rams, which he hopes to sell.

He says the rams are his only wealth and it is tough for him to survive with this activity.

Though he would prefer to stay in Senegal, he wouldn't mind leaving given the opportunity.

But this does not discourage the determined campaigners.

"When you do a campaign, you can't expect to achieve 100% success," Mrs Diouf says philosophically.

She prefers to point to those young men who have come to ask for support and advice and to help her run the campaign.



boat, 1 Guardia Civil helicopter, 1 Customs patrol

Senegal: 1 Italian ship, 1 Italian plane, 1 Guardia Civil patrol boat, 1 Spanish Police helicopter, 3 Senegalese boats, 1 Senegalese plane, 1 Finnish plane due

Cape Verde: 1 Portuguese frigate