

Update no 4 Humanitarian Situation in Libya and the Neighbouring Countries

8 March 2011

Highlights

- Escalating fighting over the past three days in Libya and hostilities concentrated along the coast between Ras Lanuf and Sirte, and in the towns of Beriaga, Zawiya and Misrata have made delivering aid difficult for the Libyan Red Crescent
- The UN Secretary-General appealed to the Foreign Minister of Libya, Mr. Musa Kusa, on 6 March for an end to the hostilities, for full compliance with Security Council resolution 1970, the authorities in Tripoli to respect the human rights of all the country's people, and to lift restrictions on the media. Mr. Kusa has agreed access only for Tripoli.
- Mr. Kusa has agreed to the Secretary-General's suggestion to immediately dispatch a humanitarian assessment team to Tripoli although no date for the mission has been confirmed.
- The UN Secretary General has appointed the former Foreign Minister of Jordan, Mr. Abdelilah Al-Khatib as his Special Envoy.
- ERC has designated Mr. Khalikov (Head of OCHA GVA) as the Humanitarian Coordinator for the Libya crisis effective today, who will travel extensively in the region and work closely with the Resident Coordinators for Libya, Tunisia, Egypt and Niger.
- The UNHCR High Commissioner and Director for the Middle East and North Africa Bureau will be on mission in Tunisia from 7 to 10 March.
- The Regional Flash Appeal for the Libyan Crisis for USD 160 million for three months (UNHCR portion USD 32 million) was launched on 7 March 2011 in Geneva for 400,000 beneficiaries leaving Libya and 600,000 within Libya.
- The European Union's High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy Catherine Ashton dispatched a fact-finding mission to Tripoli on 6 March charged with reporting on the humanitarian and evacuation needs to the EU Summit to be held on 11 March 2011.



Egyptian Libyan border: UNHCR staff distributing water and snacks to some 250 to 300 individuals from Bangladesh, Ghana and Palestine.
UNHCR / MARCH 2011

Population Movements

According to the IOM/UNHCR Evacuation Cell by 7 March, 212,562 persons have arrived to Tunisia (total 112,169 including 19,074 Tunisian, 47,347 Egyptians, 45,748 others), Egypt (total 98,188

including 64,859 Egyptians and 33,329 others) and Niger (total 2,205 including Niger 1,865 and 340 others).

On 6 March, total of 13,380 persons were evacuated (IOM/UNHCR arranged flights and bi-lateral flights coordinated with HEC) including 11,942 from Tunisia (11,190 Egyptians and 752 others) and 1,418 from Egypt.

4 flights were scheduled on 7 March: 3 to Cairo, 1 to Bangladesh and 1 to Accra. While there is a need to continue with a reduced number of short-haul flights to return Egyptians home from Tunisia, the critical gap at present is in long-haul flights to Bangladesh and to other countries in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. IOM and UNHCR are using all the existing cash contributions to charter flights, and several donor countries have thankfully also come forward with contributions of long-haul flights. Nevertheless, with some 40-50 long-haul flights needed for those who have already crossed from Libya into Egypt and Tunisia, a significant and growing gap remains in identifying the capacity to meet even the existing needs.

60
YEARS



Cooperation from the Indian Civil Aviation Authority is required for flight approvals for all humanitarian flights carrying Bangladesh passengers from Tunisia and Egypt. Significant delays in these flight approvals are causing the evacuation to be held-up.

Country Updates

LIBYA

- *Protection*

Chadians in Libya

UNHCR received information from the Chadian consulate in Benghazi and the Libyan Red Crescent that there are 20-25,000 Chadians in different towns in eastern Libya who wish to leave Libya.

The UN has called on Libyan authorities to provide humanitarian access. It should be noted that those fleeing have not sought to go to developed countries but only want to return home. Very few of the hundreds of thousands of sub-Saharan Africans in Libya have made it to the border. UNHCR is deeply concerned about these communities and call upon the international community to facilitate resettlement to those who make it out of Libya but are unable to return to their countries of origin including Somalis, Eritreans, Palestinians and Iraqis.

- *Humanitarian Assistance*

UNHCR organized and funded an Egyptian Red Crescent (ERC) convoy of seven trucks with 25 tones of medical and essential food items for Libya. The convoy crossed the border from Egypt and ERC handed the goods over to the Libyan Red Crescent.

- *Coordination*

UNHCR is deploying a senior officer to ensure coordination of the Libya operation to support the inter-agency planning process.

The UN inter-agency assessment mission returned to Egypt from eastern Libya today and held a debriefing for the UN Country Team and donor embassies in Cairo.

TUNISIA

The UNHCR High Commissioner will be on mission to Tunisia 7-10 March 2011.

- *Protection*

A significant increase in the past few days has been observed in departures from Sfax and Quarquanna, with a noticeable number of migrants reportedly to have departed from Ktef/Laktef, an area in south-eastern Tunisia, close to the Libyan border between Zarzis and Ras Ajdir. Smugglers are reportedly getting more and more organized, although some migrants report of having collected the money and then bought a boat for the crossing. Prices from the crossing range from 450 EUR to 1,200 EUR (Info (provided by recently arrived Tunisians).

Number of people at Tunisian border has significantly slowed down, reasons not clear but coincides with reassertion increased measure of control of area by Libyan Government (HC noted this at press briefing too; ERC supplemented with reports [at present necessarily unverified] of roadblocks being erected in Libya and a camp being established 17 km from border from which onward movement to border not permitted.

Transit camps

The UNHCR tented transit camp in Choucha currently holds 15,000 people. UNHCR has set up a screening process at the camp and is registering identified persons of concern (as of 7 March, total of 311 persons: 450 Somalis, 80 Eritreans, 1 Iraqi and 1 Syrian, 1 Libyan). UNHCR is establishing a registration system at the border, including registration of vulnerable people.

So far the people received at the transit have been almost exclusively single men and third country nationals (up to 90%). Most of these have continued or will continue to their home countries soonest benefiting from the IOM/UNHCR Humanitarian Evacuation Programme.

Two new camps are being established closer to the Libyan border. The UAE Red Crescent has been allocated land by the Government for one camp. Planned capacity is not known to UNHCR. IFRC is establishing the second camp for up to 5,000 persons. The opening of these two new camps will further increase the need for systematic planning and coordination of the humanitarian efforts in response to the situation. UNHCR has agreed with IFRC that the two camps be managed in close cooperation between the two organizations.

- *Coordination*

UNHCR chairs daily coordination meetings between international organizations and NGOs in the area in Zarzis. Furthermore, UNHCR also participates in the daily coordination cell meetings of the Humanitarian Evacuation Programme.

- **Humanitarian Assistance**

At the moment, UNHCR has a capacity to respond immediately for up to 25,000 persons in addition to the non food items already delivered to the Choucha transit last Thursday.

Three rubhalls are being erected at the camp for food storage, camp kitchen and to stock non food items enabling UNHCR to immediately respond to a large influx of people (up to 10,000 persons).

The capacity of Djerba airport for handling cargo is currently being reviewed. The exercise will be extended to other airports in Tunisia.

Lastly, UNHCR is in discussion for contracting trucking and bus capacity in larger volume, to be able to respond to future expansion of the operation.

EGYPT

Egyptian border with Libya

A total of 3,335 persons arrived yesterday bringing the total of arrivals since 19 February to 101,925 including 69,908 Egyptians and over 6,000 Libyans (*numbers differ from IOM/UNHCR Evacuation Cell statistics*).

There are 5,000 estimated number of persons at the port (main nationalities: Bangladesh, Sudan, Pakistan, Ghana, Panama, Vietnam, Yemen, Jordan, Lebanon, Togo, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Chad, Iraq, Palestine).

- **Protection**

UNHCR has received information from new arrivals from Libya that the situation inside Libya is deteriorating. A group of Sudanese who arrived from Benghazi witnessed armed Libyans going door-to-door at night, forcing them to leave as well as the occurrence of rapes. They were forced to flee as their documents were taken or burnt. 400 Chadians arriving from Benghazi, Beda and Brega also stated that they were robbed, their documents confiscated and then chased away. Two men from Togo and Mali left Benghazi this morning.

Two Palestinian families with valid travel documents were not allowed to transit through Egypt to Rafah. UNHCR provided meals and water to some 35 Palestinians who are presently stuck in Musa'ad, Libya.

All 12 Ivorians decided to return home after a lot of counseling and discussion about the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. UNHCR has not received any feedback from Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A case of two Congolese minors is being followed up by UNHCR, ICRC and IOM.

Nearly 3,500 Bangladeshis in the port have been stranded for up to ten days. IOM stated that they would leave shortly as chartered flights (taking 174 persons at a time) have been scheduled to leave Marsa Matrouh in days to come.

- **Assistance**

UNHCR and IOM with help of ERC distributed some 14,000 meals. A total of 14,500 meals per day for one week is now guaranteed (UNHCR 2,000, IOM 5,000, CRS 2,500, Samaritans Purse 2,500, and Mohammed Ibn Rashid el Maktoum foundation 3,000, plus water from all) and most will hopefully continue to provide food after that.

- **Contingency planning**

UNHCR met with UNICEF, WFP, WHO and the ERC to discuss contingency planning for a mass influx of Libyans into Egypt. Agencies agreed that further discussions with the Government were necessary to start joint contingency planning and that preparedness was needed at two levels: at the border for a mass influx and inside Egypt, most probably for an urban emergency.

ALGERIA

Algerian border with Libya

It has been reported that between 24 February and 2 March, 1,725 persons entered Algeria at the border-crossing point of Debdeb. These included 263 Algerians, 520 Libyans, 473 Egyptians, 3 Syrians, 1 Bangladeshi, 3 Germans, 3 Belorussians, 6 Thais, 12 Iraqis, 5 Moroccans, 292 Vietnamese, 1 South African, 5 Brits, 44 Philipppines, 34 Pakistanis and 4 Romans.

In anticipation of possible larger movements across the border, the Algerian Red Crescent continues to reinforce its presence in Ain Amenas, where representatives from a number of diplomats missions currently are, on invitation from the Algerian government, to take care of their respective nationals.

The Algerian Government has noted that 4,000 persons have entered Algeria from Libya by land and sea since the start of the crisis. The Government will maintain its border

with Libya open and provide access to all people in need. It is sending humanitarian assistance including food supplies and medicines to the frontier.

ITALY

Between 5 and 7 March a total of 1,054 migrants arrived in Lampedusa. Total number of arrivals since mid-January is some 7,727.

Air Evacuation

As of 5 March, 55 flights had departed with 7,990 persons onboard destined for Egypt, Mali, Bangladesh and Ghana. An additional 34 flights were in the process of being scheduled with a capacity for 8,495.

Resource Mobilization

The Regional Flash Appeal for the Libyan Crisis was launched on 7 March in Geneva by the UN ERC Valerie Amos, IOM DG William Lacy Swing and the HC. Appeal requests total of USD 160.3m in funding for March-June 2011. UNHCR's total requirements are USD 32.2m.

The donors who have already contributed funding or in-kind assets to the joint IOM-UNHCR humanitarian evacuation operation were thanked for their generous support and reminded that the urgent evacuation priorities are to help third country nationals return to their home countries and to be prepared for the contingency of massive new population movements.

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