

International Organization for Migration: Mediterranean Migrant Arrivals Drop in 2016, But Fatalities Remain High



Geneva, September 27 (RHC/Xinhua) -- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) said Tuesday that while the influx of maritime refugees and migrants in Europe has considerably dropped this year compared to 2015, the Mediterranean is set to claim more lives in 2016 than last year's count of 3,673.

"It's important to note that last year's total of more than 1 million migrants crossing the Mediterranean to Italy, Spain and Greece will most likely not be reached this year," IOM spokesman Joel Millman explained.

"Nonetheless, despite the drop in arrivals, fatalities exceeded last year's total at this time by almost 600 and seem virtually certain to surpass what we saw last year," he added.

Latest IOM figures reveal that over 302,000 refugees and migrants have reached European shores by sea since the beginning of the year.

This is much fewer than last year's total over the same period, which saw almost 510,000 maritime migrant entries on European Union (EU) soil. This significant drop is mainly attributed to the EU-Turkey migrant deal which came into force earlier this year.

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