

Migrants from Ocean Viking to be relocated to EU countries



Rome, September 16 (RHC)-- Italy's Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio confirmed over the weekend that 82 African migrants who remain on board the Ocean Viking vessel will be allowed to disembark in the Lampedusa port, for they will be relocated in several European Union (EU) countries.

"There is a great misunderstanding regarding the fact that a safe port has been assigned to the Ocean Viking for the simple reason that we have assigned it only because Europe has decided to adhere to our request to take most of those migrants," Di Maio said.

According to Interior Minister Luciana Lamorgese, the 82 migrants will be transferred to France, Germany, Portugal, Luxembourg and Italy, for these five countries have just concluded a "temporary agreement" to manage this humanitarian situation. "We now have to agree on a real European temporary mechanism," France's Interior Minister Christophe Castaner tweeted.

On September 23, however, the EU ministers are expected to meet and discuss a permanent solution for the distribution of migrants rescued at sea, as local media Valeurs reported.

"Forget the "European borders" legend: Matteo Salvini replaced by the Left, the doors are wide open again! The Ocean Viking migrants will soon be spread in our towns and villages." The meme reads, "Migrants: Italy allows Ocean Viking to disembark in Lampedusa. The Ocean Viking, which was waiting

for a safe port to land 82 migrants rescued at sea, was authorized by Italy to dock on Lampedusa island."

Last August, the Ocean Viking spent two weeks in the Mediterranean with 356 rescued migrants until six European countries agreed to relocate them. Doctors Without Borders then asked the EU authorities to establish a permanent "rescue and relocation" system instead of granting specific agreements for each situation. This system has not been implemented thus far.

Nevertheless, Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, who was attending a meeting with EU authorities in Brussels on Saturday, announced he is willing to promote a "multilevel and structural" procedure for the reception of rescued people, which would imply fostering a "European compact" for the redistribution of migrants among several EU countries.

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