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PRESS RELEASE: LAMPEDUSA – CIR: THESE ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF A SHORT-SIGHTED POLICY

The Italian Council for Refugees (CIR) is deeply concerned for what is happening in Lampedusa in these hours. We firmly condemn any kind of violence damaging, above all, the people arriving in Lampedusa in need of protection. We wonder where the migrants arriving tomorrow, maybe fleeing from Libya, will be received.

“What is happening is clearly the consequence of a short-sighted policy” said Christopher Hein CIR Director “The agreements signed with Tunisia by the Italian Government didn’t take into account the particular social and economical situation faced by Tunisia. They exclusively foresee restrictive measures, repatriation and push-backs, without opening legal entry channel. The re-opening of the visa decree would have been the only way to accompany Tunisia in this difficult transition”

We must recall that migrants arrived during the last period from Tunisia are coming mostly from the Libyan – Tunisian border area, whose economy is mainly based on border trade. This trade drastically reduced after the taking of power of the Libyan Transitional Council. Tourism, the second milestone of the local economy, during the summer period almost stopped. Young migrants reaching our coasts are mainly unemployed because of the post-revolution.

“Finally we wonder why transfers from Lampedusa were not carried out as soon as possible. Considering that the situation was increasingly tense, this is incomprehensible” Christopher Hein concluded.

For further information:

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