

Push Back Frontex!

**Against a new dimension of
left-to-die-policy at sea**

WSF 2015 Tunis

More information:

<http://afrique-europe-interact.net/>

<http://www.borderline-europe.de/>

<http://ffm-online.org/>

<http://watchthemed.net/>

Headquarter of FRONTEX in Warsaw

Opened on 26th of April 2005

Rondo ONZ 1, 22nd and 23rd floor.

The office just moved from this
skyscraper to another one behind.



The new building with the Frontex office
The neon there says " I love Warsawa"



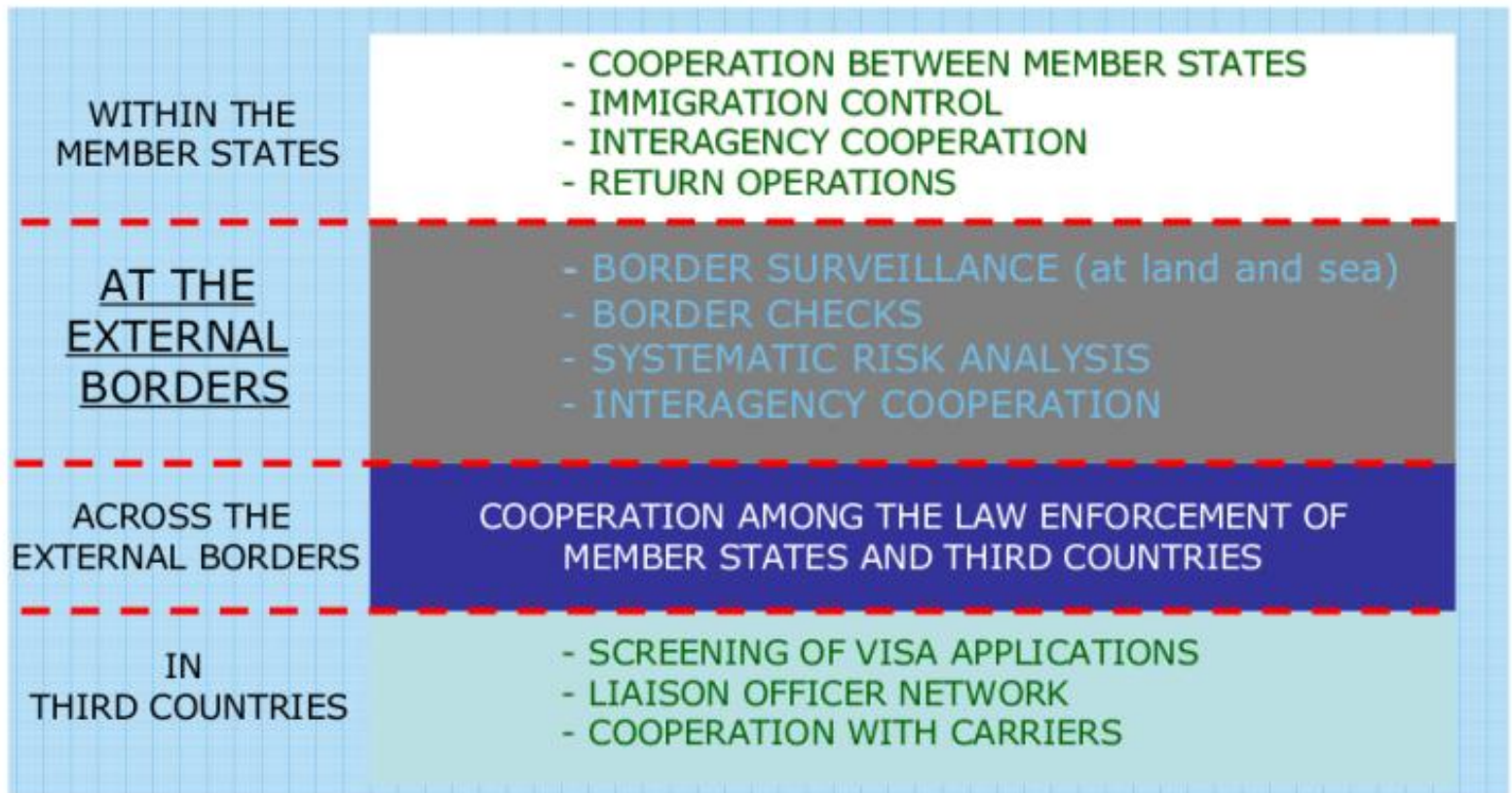
Foundation, budget and staff of Frontex

- **On the 26th of October 2004**, the EU Council adopted the **regulation n°2007/2004**, creating Frontex as an agency for the management of the external borders of the EU
- **Frontex „birthday“ is the 1st of May 2005**, operations started on the 3rd of October 2005
- **Budget:** increased from € 88,8 m (2009) to € 114,53 m (2015)
- **Staff:** increased from 226 (2009) to 316 (2015)
- “Following Frontex’ Strategy, the largest part of Frontex’ budget is allocated to **Joint Operations**. This to further improve the capabilities of Member States to tackle demanding situations and also to enhance Frontex’ capabilities and effectiveness in coordinating the operational activities of the Member States and Schengen Associated Countries. **Risk analysis** will enable better **focusing on the main routes of irregular migration** and the enhancement of the impact of border management on fighting crime at the external borders. ” (Frontex Program of Work 2015)

Aims and Tasks of Frontex (in French)



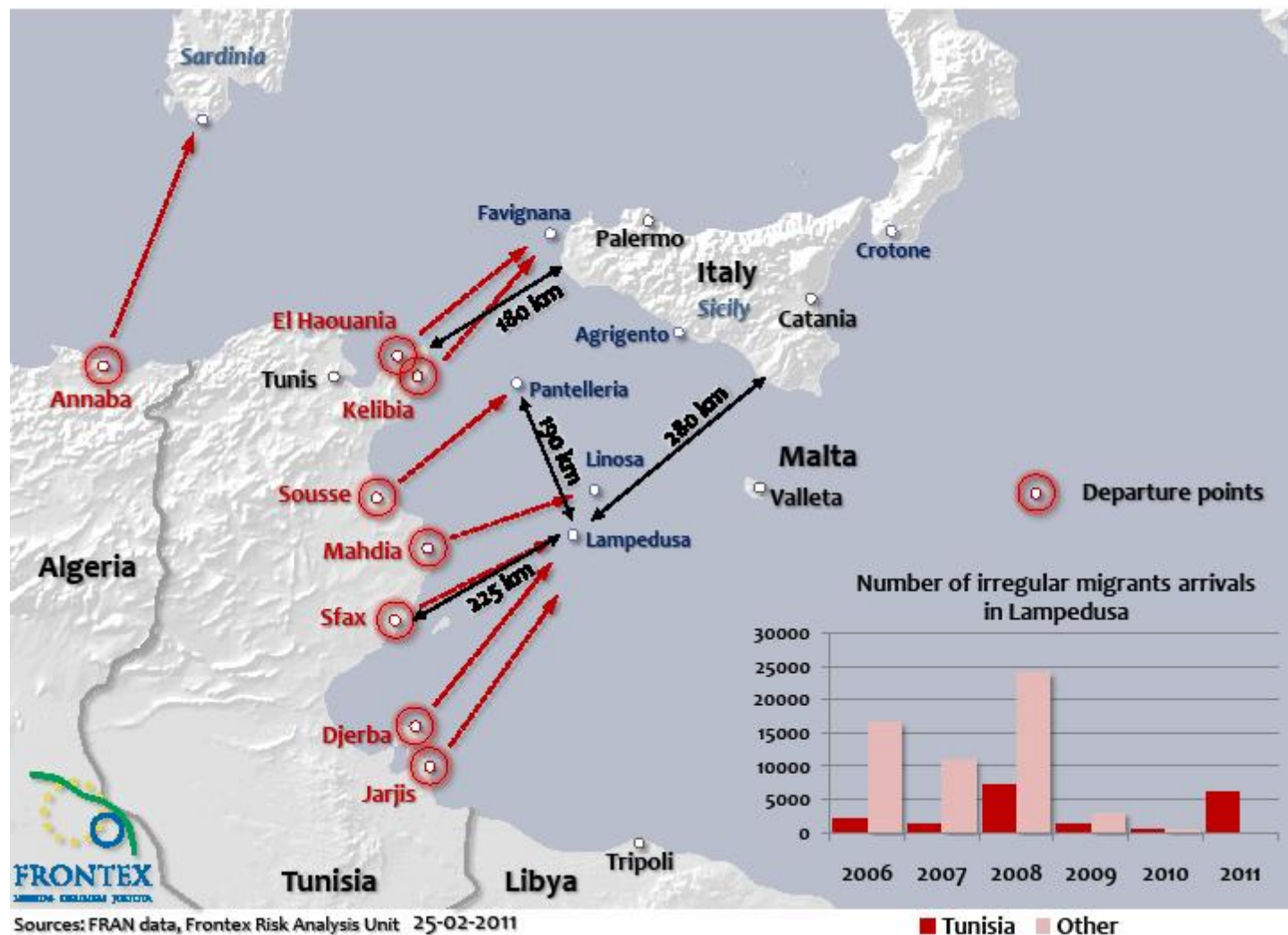
EU (FOUR TIER) BORDER SECURITY STRATEGY



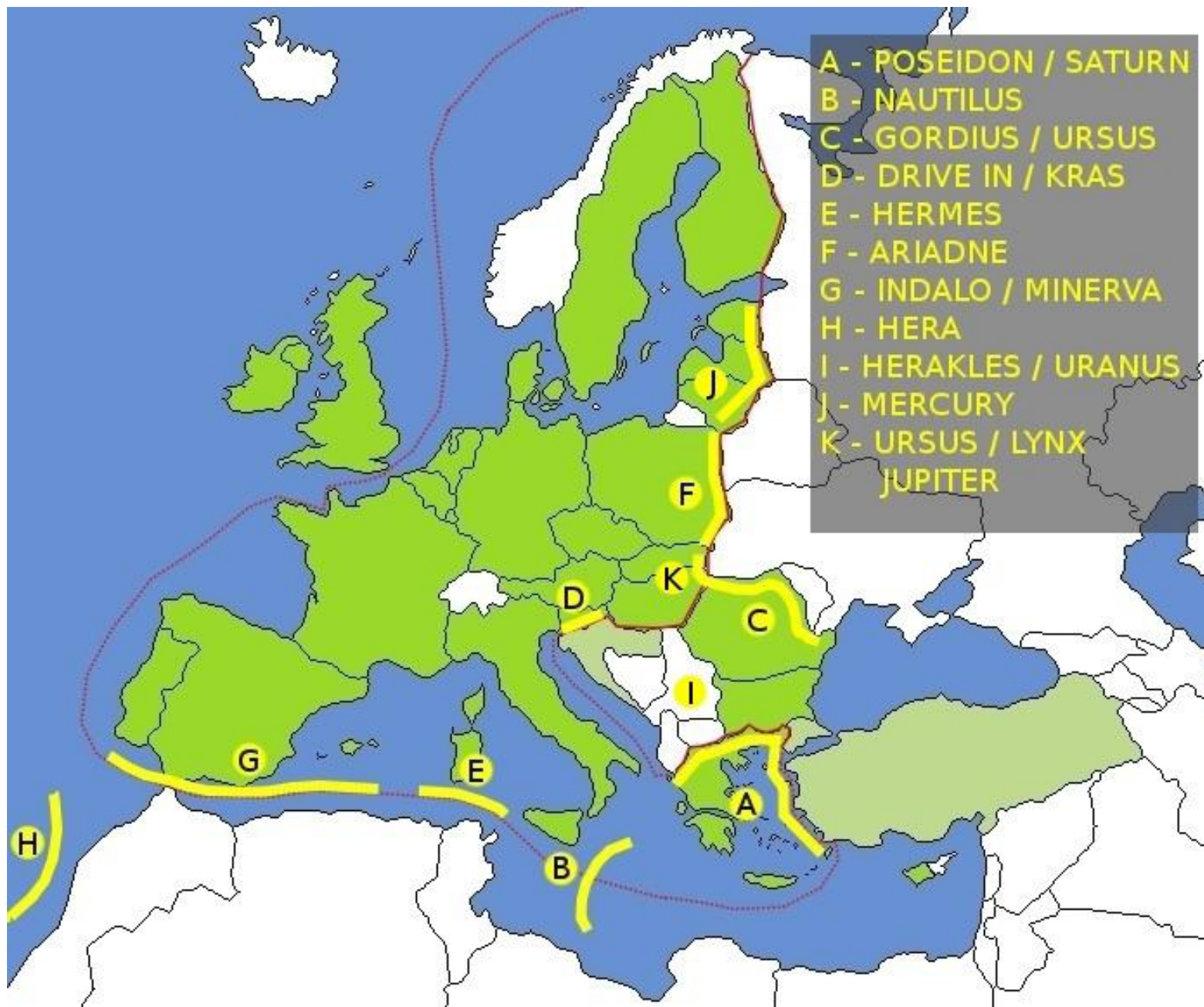
Important activities of Frontex

- Besides the **operations along the sea- and land-borders**, Frontex is a significant part of
- the training and technical armament of **border police forces**,
- the externalisation of borders through **cooperation with third countries**,
- the creation of and the participation in the border surveillance system **EUROSUR**,
- the border control operation **Mos Maiorum**,
- as well as brutally executed **charter-deportations**

Risk Analysis 2011: „Flow of migration“ from Tunisia?



Frontex Operations in former years



OPERATIONS MARITIMES

Structure
Européenne
Permanente
European Patrols
Network

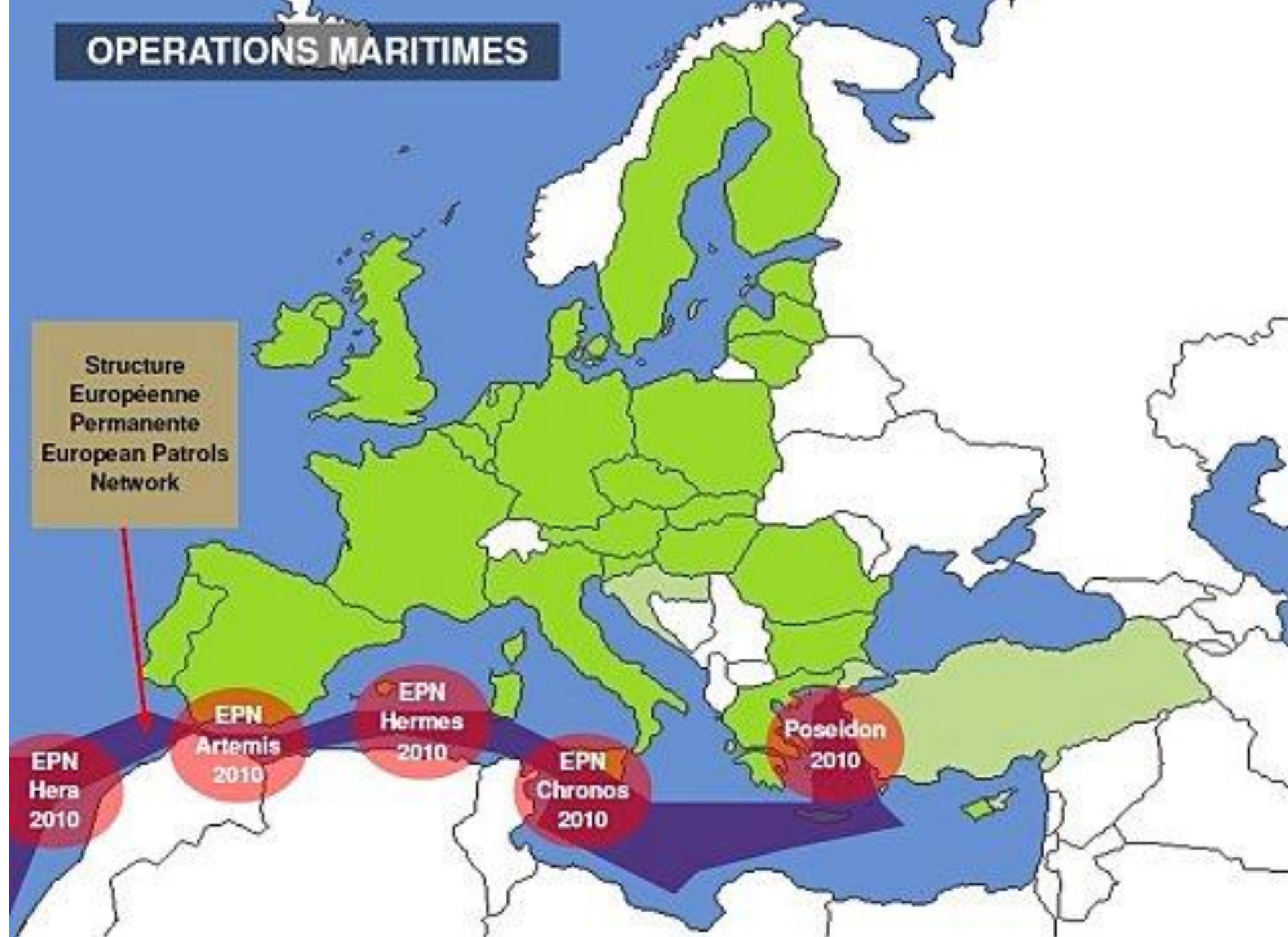
EPN
Hera
2010

EPN
Artemis
2010

EPN
Hermes
2010

EPN
Chronos
2010

Poseldon
2010



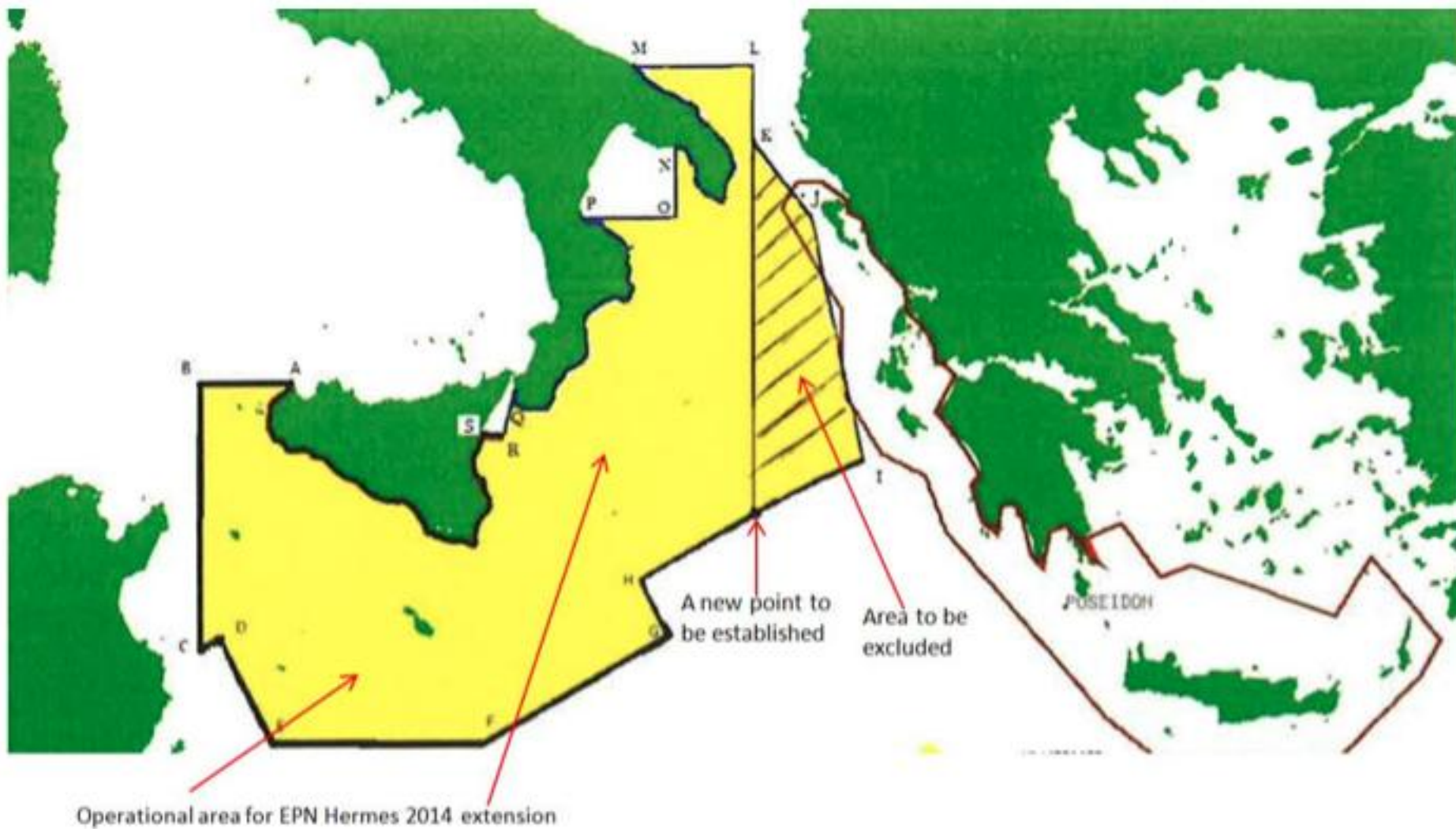
Operation Mare Nostrum („our sea“)

- Italy's Operation Mare Nostrum, in place **after the “tragedy” near Lampedusa on the 3rd of October 2013** with more than 360 deaths, **until December 2014**, was responsible for the **rescue of over 172,000 migrants** on the whole area between Libya and Italy
- Officially and in the beginning, this operation of the Italian Navy was **planned as a cooperation with Libya to prevent more arrivals of boatpeople**, but this was **impossible** because of the increasing conflicts in Libya and more and more departures of migrants and refugees, especially Syrians and Sub-Saharan Africans
- Mare Nostrum was mainly **financed by Italy with about € 9 million per month** (it received only € 30 m from the EU Commission) and finished because **other EU governments** did not want to give money for it and **complained about too many arrivals** (Mare Nostrum was called “a bridge to Europe” and Italy was accused of not preventing migrants to continue their way to other EU countries)

Frontex operation Triton

- The operation Triton, first called „Frontex Plus“, **started in November 2014**
- Triton has a budget of only **2,8 million Euro per month**
- The operation is confined to a **30-mile zone around Italy's coastal waters**, possess a third of Mare Nostrum's maritime capacities, and coordinated through the EU-funded Frontex agency
- The **aims** of Triton are not to rescue boatpeople, but
- **to reduce the number of arrivals**, which stayed stable instead (8000-10000 per month, 16000 since october 31st) and
- **to deter boatpeople** – Frontex reminds that Triton is a police operation

Limits of Operation Triton



Deadly consequences of Frontex Operation Triton

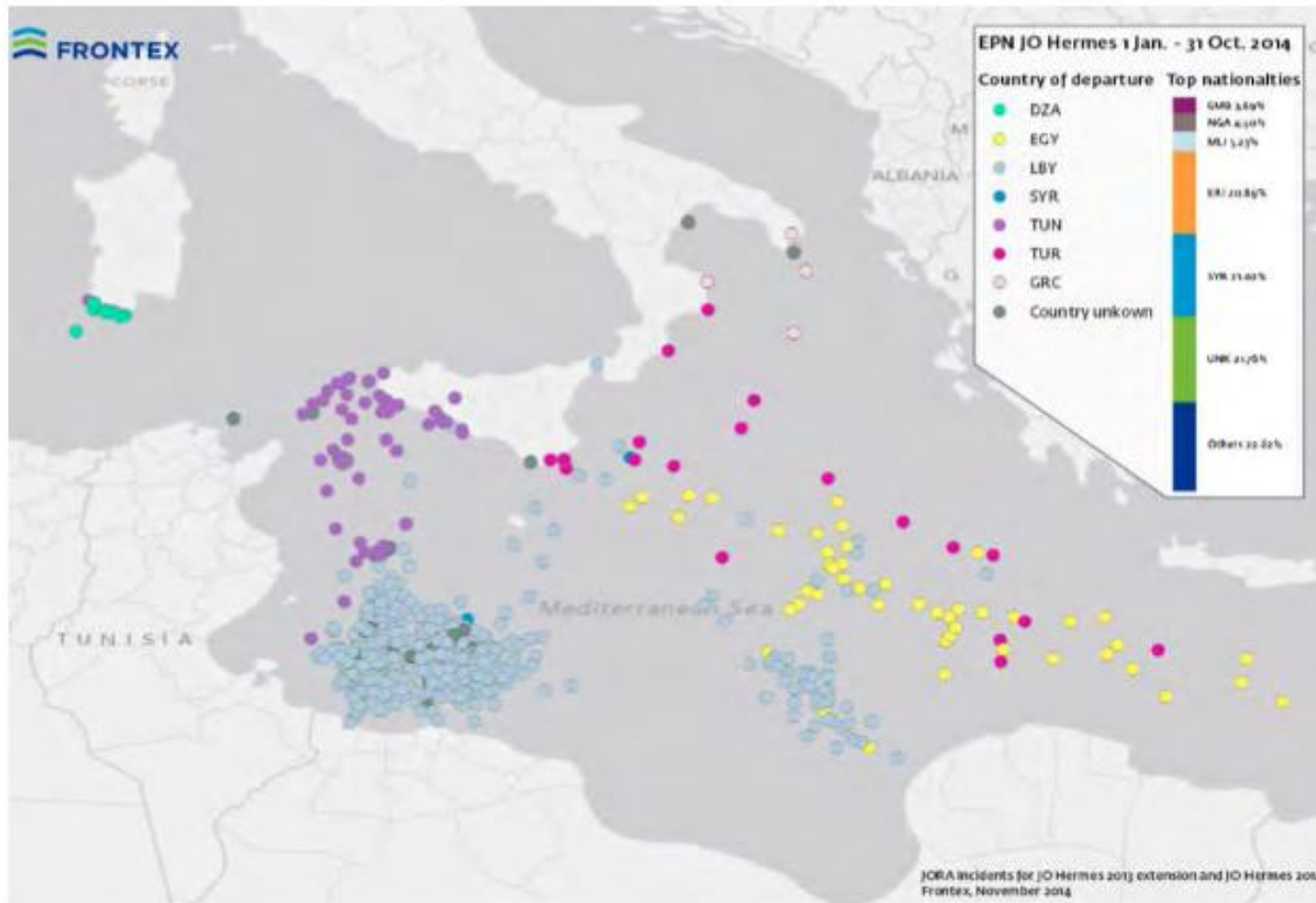


Figure 3: Boats detected by the assets of operation Mare Nostrum and Joint Operation Hermes (1 Jan – 31 Oct 2014), and percentage of nationalities detected. The coloured dots indicate the last country of departure.

Klaus Rösler's Letter to the Italian Government

- In a letter from the 9th of December 2014, Klaus Rösler called upon the Italian Ministry of Interior, the navy and the coastguards to stop the current practice of rescuing boat-people in distress at sea. After the termination of the Italian navy operation Mare Nostrum which rescued the lives of more than 120.000 people, and at the beginning of the Frontex operation Triton, **Rösler attacked the authorities in Rome for assigning vessels to move “into zones outside the operational area of Triton”** (which means beyond the 30 nautic miles area around Italy) in order to assist vessels in distress. This **“would not correspond to the operational plan”** and **not every SOS-call needed to be acted upon.**
- <http://www.euractiv.it/it/news/sociale/10459-triton-frontex-a-italia-troppi-interventi-fuori-area.html>

Frontex and so-called „ghost ships“

- In January 2015, the public relations officer of Frontex accused people smugglers of a **“new dimension of cruelty”** when several crews of so-called ‘ghost ships’, allegedly not seaworthy, were said to have abandoned the vessels. Following research conducted by reporters of the German TV station NDR, these claims of Frontex turned out as deliberate false statements, at least concerning the **case of the vessel “Blue Sky M”**. But Frontex sees no reason to re-consider its public relation policy and to correct its false statement. This *“shows how far Europe’s border guards are going in their propaganda battle against ‘illegal migration’. Obviously they want to repudiate their responsibility for the deaths of many refugees, and put the blame on the smugglers”*
<http://daserste.ndr.de/panorama/archiv/2015/Fuehrungsloses-Fluechtlingsschiff-Wie-Frontex-die-Wahrheit-verdreht,-schleuser164.html>

Positions of Italian Navy...

- Admiral Filippo Maria Foffi, the navy's commander-in-chief, told a conference in Brussels that **the Italian navy had no intention of standing down**, and hinted at a **division within the Italian government on the issue**.
- **“We didn't receive any signed order saying we were going to finish operations on 1 November,”** Foffi said. “Mare Nostrum is working exactly as we worked in the last year and we are not passing on our activity to someone else. Today I am responsible and I think tomorrow I will also be responsible”.
- Pressed on a statement by the rightwing interior minister, Angelino Alfano, about the imminent demise of Mare Nostrum, Foffi said that he received the prime minister's orders through the defence minister and reacting to Alfano's statement was “not the way that military men conduct their activities”.
- <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/28/italian-navy-refugee-rescue-mission-mare-nostrum>

...Italian Coast Guards...

- A responsible operational officer of the Italian coastguard on a conference in Catania in November 2014 was underlining **that their ships are very often operating in the Libyan SAR-Area and that this will be part of their work also in future, independent from Mare Nostrum**
- It seems that the Italian coastguard is taking it's responsibility very serious and seeks to **compensate the ending of Mare Nostrum by involving more and more merchant vessels**

... and UNHCR proposes:

*“ the establishment of a **robust European search and rescue operation** in the Mediterranean, similar to the Italian Mare Nostrum operation”* (Press Release, 12. March 2015)

Even IOM criticizes Triton

- *“Migrants are forced to travel on unseaworthy boats and in dire weather conditions,” Soda said. “Given these circumstances, **the (relatively small) number and the kind of ships used at the moment would be unable to rescue a large number of people fleeing Libya.**”*
- *“The current system, **Triton**, patrolling the **Mediterranean clearly is inadequate in the face of this situation,**” Ambassador Swing added. “It is necessary to establish immediately a rescue system on the high seas that can respond to this emergency effectively to save migrants off Libya’s coast.”*
- <https://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/news-and-views/press-briefing-notes/pbn-2015/pbn-listing/at-least-3800-migrants-rescued-f.html>

Examples of distress calls from boatpeople and reactions of Frontex

- 18.02.2015 / 19:59 / Off the Coast of Libya
- **Watch The Med Alarm Phone Investigation – 15 February 2015**

Case name: 2015_02_15-CM8

Situation: 10-12 vessels in distress off the coast of Libya, 2164 people rescued

Status of WTM Investigation: Ongoing (latest information received on the 18th of February 2015)

Place of Incident: Central Mediterranean Sea, off the coast of Libya

Summary of the Case: On Sunday the 15th of February 2015, at noon, the shift team of the Alarm Phone was contacted by Father Mussie Zerai who had received information on two vessels in distress with hundreds of passengers on board. The migrants had embarked at around 3am from Tripoli and were located off the coast of Libya. With the provided coordinates, the shift team could find the position of the vessels and notified the Italian coastguards at 1pm. MRCC Rome stated that they were working on 12 different cases and knew already about the two vessels in question. They could not confirm rescue and the shift team suggested that it would call again at a later point in time.



»Our project is no solution, but an emergency intervention«

Press Release, 8th of October 2014

Watch The Med Alarm Phone against Left-to-die cases at Sea

A Transnational Network alerts as of the 10th of October 2014 in cases of Distress and Push-backs

The Mediterranean Sea in 2014 remains a mass grave for refugees and migrants. In the first nine months of the year there have been more than 3.000 registered deaths. (...)

A transnational network of human rights activists cannot stand this unacceptable situation any longer. Since the end of September, in Tunis, Palermo, Strasbourg, Vienna, Berlin and several other cities, about 50 activists have been testing a collective emergency phone for boat-people. The Alarm Phone operates day and night with a multilingual team on standby. It will cover calls from the migration routes in the Central Mediterranean, in the Aegean Sea and between Morocco and Spain. The Watch The Med Alarm Phone cannot itself carry out rescue operations but will raise the alarm if such operations are delayed or even denied altogether.

<http://watchthemed.net/>

Former Actions against Frontex

- Warszawa May 2008
- Hamburg August 2008
- Lesbos summer 2009
- Jena June 2010
- Samos summer 2010
- Brussels October 2010
- WSF Dakar February 2011
- Tunisia, Choucha 2011-2014 and WSF 2013
- Refugee March from Strasbourg to Brussels 2014

Action at the Frontex headquarter in Warszawa May 2008





August 208: Actions against charter deportations at Hamburg Airport





Sana ins Getriebe
der Abschiebemaschine
Wer bleiben will
soll bleiben!



Noborder-Camp Lesbos / Greece summer 2009





For Freedom
of
Movement!

Frontex =
Killing-
Agency!!!





Action at the Caravane Festival in Jena 2010



Demonstration against Frontex on Samos in summer 2010



FRONTEX

SAMOS ISLAND HEADQUARTERS

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For guest officers assistance

+30 697 22 50 812

For national/international Press and Media

Contact Frontex

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fax. +48 22 544 95 01

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00-124 Warsaw, Poland

e-mail: frontex@frontex.europa.eu





Action in the airport of Brussels, October 2010



Demonstration at the WSF in Dakar in February 2011 for freedom of movement...



...and against Frontex...



... in an office of the Senegalese police







Mai 2011: Camp Choucha at the Tunisian-Libyan border



Voice of Choucha : Open borders – take in refugees!



July 2012: Visit of an international delegation in Choucha



WSF Tunis 2013: Refugees from Choucha protest...



... and start a sit-in with a hunger strike
at the UNHCR office





REINSTALLATION DANS DES PAYS
SURS AVEC TOUS LES SYSTEMES
DE PROTECTION
NOUS RECLAMONS
NOS DROITS

RESETTLEMENT IN SAFE
COUNTRIES COUNTING
WITH EFFECTIVE
SYSTEM OF
PROTECTION

NOUS VOULONS
INTERNATIONALES
RESCAPES DE
LIBYENNE DE
NOUS LES REFUGES DE
AVONS BESOIN D'AIDES
PERSONNE NEST ALLEZ

اللاجو

ONT PAS LA CAPACITÉ DE
INSTALLER 262 REFUGIÉS?
Choucha Comp





المقو
تتخل
في م

إمبارا ب جوع
من
29 في 2019 إلى الآن
إجاعة الإنسانية

Wir sind im Hungerstreik
Seit 29.3.2019 bis unsere
Probleme Gelöst
Sind

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
مرويت ورجاء
لننتصر

تحرير جدران القلعة
سكن كرامة اسلمة
جديدة في جرشونة

UNHCR
HUMANITARIAN
STANDARDS

WE FORCED
TO BE INEC-
RATED IN
TUNISI

WE ARE REFUGEES
WE HAVE REFUGEE
STATUS
WE NEED EQUALITY

WE ARE THE
DAY OF
THE

EU SHOULD DO
SOMETHING TO
HELP REFUGEE

لا البرقة
بدر الجثين

Choucha Camp January 2014:
Officially closed since June 2013...



... but still 2-300 people living there...



... among them many women and children



**Those who have no chance to get resettlement risk their lives
by taking boats**





2011/05/27 12:20 AM

June 2014: Refugee March in Schengen



BORDERS
KILL



FRONTEX FRONTEX FRONTEX



Melilla 2014
Spain/Morocco





KONTEX

SON NOS

INFANTS

ARMY

KILLS!

Demands of our Campaign



Push back Frontex!

Against a new dimension of left-to-die-policy at sea

- As long as the freedom of movement for all is not a reality, deaths at sea can only be prevented if all people in distress are rapidly rescued everywhere, also off the coast of Libya!
- We aim for an Euro-Mediterranean space that is not characterised by a deadly border regime but by solidarity and the right for protection and freedom of movement.
- **We demand the immediate withdrawal of the murderous Frontex order!**
- **Let us stop these inhumane policies, let us defend the rights of refugees and migrants!**

PUSH BACK FRONTEX

FRONTEX TRIES TO ORDER ITALIAN
AUTHORITIES NOT TO RESCUE
BEYOND 30 NAUTIC MILES OF IT'S
COAST ANYMORE. LET'S STOP THIS
POLICY OF LEFT-TO-DIE! WE DEMAND:

✗ IMMEDIATE RESCUE ALL
OVER THE MEDITERRANEAN!

✗ ABOLISH THE DEADLY
VISA- AND BORDERREGIME!

✗ FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT!

MAKE DEATH AT SEA HISTORY!

WWW.AFRIQUE-EUROPE-INTERACT.NET

First Action: 25.1.15 European Police Congress, Berlin







Rösler interview after the action in Berlin – but will it be the reality?

- *People are saying that you ordered the Italian Coastguard not to call Frontex for rescue out of the 30 miles area. Is this correct?*
- *No, this is absolutely not correct. In my letter to the Italian authorities of November 25 2014 I talked only about a better coordination of emergency rescue cases. There have never been doubts that Frontex must perform its obligation to rescue if nearby and with an appropriate vessel. We never discussed the obligation and we are active in every third rescue case. So we never may oblige the Italian authorities to take care only for a certain area. We only wanted to talk about a better coordination of Frontex vessels in rescue operations.
So Frontex will not operate only in the 30 miles zone in rescue operations?
Right*
- <http://www.vice.com/de/read/frontex-nimmt-stellung-zu-der-geisterschiff-kontroverse-343>

Rösler in an interview with „Die Welt“, 12.3.15

- *„Border protection does not mean to push back refugees. Our priority is to **support legal ways of travelling and prevent illegal activities, which means criminal acts at the borders.**“*
- *„Frontex was involved in a third of the rescue operations of the Italian coastguard.“*
- *„In future it is important to make sure that the route across the Mediterranean Sea to Italy will no longer be used so often. Behind this is the question how far we can **cooperate with transit countries** in the Mediterranean area.“*
- Asked for his opinion about **asylum centers in transit countries:**
*„To give more legal opportunities to come to Europe makes it easier to control the borders and save lives. (...) This would also make it easier to **concentrate on the illegal activities.**“*
- <http://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article138328611/Grenzschutz-bedeutet-nicht-Fluechtlingsabwehr.html>
- **= to prevent those from coming to Europe who are not wanted – with the help of third countries like Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Niger...!**

PUSH BACK FRONTEX

KLAUS RÖSLER, seit 2008 Abteilungsleiter für Frontex-Einsätze an den Außengrenzen, fordert am 9.12.2014 in einem Brief die italienischen Behörden auf, die aktuelle Praxis der Seenotrettung gegenüber Bootsflüchtlingen einzustellen. Er greift Rom dafür an, dass Schiffe nach wie vor die Anweisung erhalten, sich in „außerhalb des operativen Einsatzgebietes liegende Zonen“ zu begeben. Das „entspreche nicht dem operativen Plan und werde leider in Zukunft nicht berücksichtigt werden“. RÖSLER HAT DAMIT VON HÖCHSTER STELLE DER EU-GRENZSCHUTZ-AGENTUR UNMISSVERSTÄNDLICH DAZU AUFGERUFEN, FLÜCHTLINGE UND MIGRANTINNEN IN SEENOT MASSENHAFT STERBEN ZU LASSEN. I

DIESER MANN IST NICHT ZU RETTEN

MAKE DEATH AT SEA HISTORY!
WWW.AFRIQUE-EUROPE-INTERACT.NET

Proposals for actions

- At the **European Parliament**, Strasbourg (end of April?)
- At the **Frontex headquarter in Warszawa** (21st of May: European Day of Borderguards)
- At **African Embassies** (planned for the 22nd of May by CISPM)
-?

- More information:

- <http://afrique-europe-interact.net/>
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 - <http://ffm-online.org/>
 - <http://watchthemed.net/>