

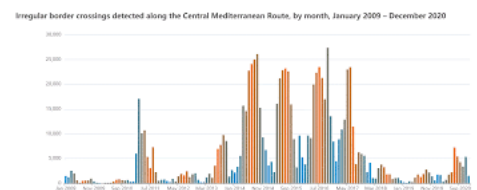
<b>FORUM:</b>	General Assembly
<b>ISSUE:</b>	Measures to Strengthen Border Security in the North African States to Manage the Illicit Movement of Migrants, Weapons, and Drugs.
<b>STUDENT OFFICER:</b>	HwiSoo Ahn
<b>POSITION:</b>	Deputy President of General Assembly

---

## Introduction

A nation's border is a place that must be severely protected by guards and security to sustain the nation's governance and sovereignty. This means the vulnerable frontiers without concentrated protection will be a great catalyst for a nation to decline in power. However, African nations,

especially the Northern region, are facing challenges to manage and secure their border. These challenges exist in various forms. These lethal factors have detrimental impacts on many innocent citizens and communities and even paralyze governmental institutions. As these illegal activities are becoming more prevalent in the Northern African border, Northern African nations will face huge difficulties sustaining their sovereignty over their territory. Even though there are many posing issues, the situation can be improved by setting an effective law or establishing an international organization.



*Graph of illegal border crossing in Northern Africa*

## Background

Historically, people have been unethical when doing a countless number of tasks, from creating hazardous materials to smuggling lethal items and performing illegal activities. However, these law-breaking activities are giving severe damage to the nations that possess relatively weak governmental authority- North African countries- because threat of terrorism by IS, counterinsurgency

movements, poor socio-economic conditions, and violent extremism. United Nations Office on Drug and Crime publishes that between 2014 and 2017, more than 600,000 people illegally migrated to another area through the Northern African border, and these numbers are constantly increasing. Unfortunately, these migrant groups include a vast number of smugglers who are engaged in the black market. As



explained by the 4Mi (Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism) project, smugglers with a base in Northern Africa and their border are trafficking 53.6% of the migrants. In addition, according to the local witnesses, many claims that the smugglers mostly own their businesses that deal with weapons, smuggling, and drug trade. According to Max Gallien's research, some of the smugglers are even supporting terrorist groups to enter different nations. However, many Northern region nations such as Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Egypt are having severe troubles effectively blocking the issues due to the vast number of corrupted civil servants in the immigration bureau and trade departments.



*Brief explanation of 4Mi project*

## Problems Raised

### *Weaken Public Security*

While the illegal trades are affecting various aspects, the most severe issue is the threat of national security. Most of the Northern African nations possess weak public power, so they are ineffective in preventing smuggling issues near the nation's border. Most illegal smuggling brings terrorists, drugs, and small illicit weapons from foreign countries which will later provoke huge consequences. According to the local witness, many testimonies are stating that most of the smugglers have close relationships with terrorist groups and supporting their activities. Thus, smuggling will cause more increased and organized criminal routes. Above all, according to INTERPOL, smuggling networks are becoming more complex and organized; for instance, they divide the intrinsic role of each of the participants engaged in the smuggling business. These roles can be middlemen, boat captains, a person who provides illegal trade routes, or people who offer accommodation along the way. The more sophisticated smuggling gets the harder it is to detect and restrain it. In other words, crime and illegal activities in the country would continuously increase, weakening public security.

Not only the influence of terrorists but also smuggling in the Northern African border is aggravating the distribution of small illicit arms and drugs to other countries. These arms can play a



*Terrorist group in Northern Africa*

detrimental role for other foreign nations to deal with severe riots or serious crimes. Since most smugglers are pursuing profit and supporting terrorists, they deliver vast amounts of small illicit arms and drugs. According to Migration Data Portal, 3.2 million migrants are crossing the Northern African border. Also, civilians in Libya own 900,000 small illicit arms that exceed twice as many arms than military and police. Moreover, most of the smugglers or brokers offer bribes to the polices and other civil servants, making it the governments hard to perform strong were enforce authority to the circumstances unless the support of other nations. Consequently, the influx of illegal substances will decrease the quality of their public security.



*Symbolizing weak government in North Africa*

### *Human Right Abusement during the Process of Smuggling*

Recently, many nations placed their border guards or combatant police units to restrain the smuggling. These current trends help us infer that the punishment of illegal trafficking is harsh. Consequently, many brokers deliver migrants and illegal items inside the container or hermetically sealed space to avoid the crackdown and penalties, but these facilities are extremely inadequate. Thus, many migrants lose their lives by suffocation. The lousy facilities that migrants have to go through threaten their lives and the inferior vehicles have detrimental effects on their safety. There are many circumstances which include: sinking accident, perish in the desert due to vehicle deficiency, and dehydration. Furthermore, since smuggling is outside the boundary of law, migrants cannot be protected by public laws meaning that they must face any situations that violate human rights: sexual abuse and unwanted complicity in a crime. According to UNODC, in many cases, smugglers use migrants to deliver their material to the target area and mistreat them during the travel. This means as the number of smugglings is increasing, the number of victims will also increase.

## **International Actions**

### *Setting up the Protocol*

In January of 2008, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Smuggling of Migrants Protocol). 124 state members are parties to this protocol which sets up clear standards to judge whether the circumstances are smuggling or not. Before this protocol, many nations did not have dedicated action plans regarding smuggling; thus, they dealt with challenges to detect and restrain trafficking by themselves. To be specific, protocol suggests international



collaboration to track the small illicit arms to prevent illegal trading. Moreover, the protocol suggests all the member states to put effort and strengthen the coast and the border. However, after this protocol was set, the specific punishments to the smuggling group and the nations that support or remain idle onlookers even they supported the protocol.

### *EU Action Plan against Migrant Smuggling*

The EU is planning to establish a plan that includes protocols and laws regarding illegal migration and smuggling. The Special Issue of the European Journal of Criminal Policy and Research shows that many smugglers are involved in crime in foreign countries. Thus, the EU sees illegal smuggling as the potential of crime and put their effort into creating an action plan to restrain the smuggling and illegal migrations. This action plan includes enhanced police, judicial responses, and proactive financial investigations.

## **Key Players**

### *Libya*

Many smugglers have a base in Libya, and they arrange the smuggling journeys to the Cameroonians and Nigerians. However, recently they put effort into detecting the route, and they caught and returned 11900 migrants in 2020 who are reaching Europe. Moreover, European Union conducted interview with 41 migrants about the smuggling routes. Thus, European Border and Coast Guard Agency and unveiled the largest smuggling route in the Mediterranean Sea. European Union conducted the interview with 41 migrants about the smuggling routes.

### *Tunisia*

Tunisia has also historically been a primary destination for migration from another African region, such as Côte d'Ivoire. However, recently, due to the pandemic, migrants cannot generate income. Moreover, almost all the lawful entry into and departure from the country are closed, so the sub-Saharan migrants are having difficulty returning to their origins. Thus, many sub-Saharan migrants residing in Tunisia embark on a smuggling journey to Europe or another region for their livelihoods.



## Possible Solutions

### *Form an International Association*

The most direct way to curtail the number of smuggling and illegal trades might be the strong governmental authority. Many illegal activities are veiled due to the insufficient governmental power for countries including Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt. However, if other nations who possess strong power associate and communicate about the smuggling route information with those nations, there will be huge progress in detecting and restraining the illegal activities happening inside the Northern African border. Moreover, international collaboration in detecting and preventing smuggling routes will effectively halt illegal trafficking. Increased frequency of detecting the smuggling route will effectively reduce the number of smuggling. Moreover, smooth communication through the association can lead to a quick reaction.

### *Enhanced Punishment and Establishment of Law*

Many brokers are trafficking illegal items and migrants because these can bring them huge property. According to the Migration Data Portal, migrant and illegal goods trafficking generate approximately 6.75 billion dollars per year. However, when the smuggling business becomes a high-risk and low-profit operation, there will be a rapid reduction of smuggling in the North African border. Moreover, the establishment of law codes covering the area of smuggling will play as an great obstacle to restrain the further development of illegal trafficking. For example, the EU established a law that reads, “banning the usage of obsolete boats and require all the boats to register to the Maritime Management Department.” These law codes help the government to track the boat. Moreover, most of the smugglers' groups use the obsolete boat to avoid surveillance and cost-cutting, since banning the usage of obsolete boats will effectively interrupt the development of the smuggling business.

## Glossary

### *Smuggling*

the illegal movement of goods into or out of a country. (In this report, smuggling also include human trafficking.)

### *UNODC*

UNODC is the abbreviation for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and was established in 1997 as the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention by combining the United Nations International Drug Control Program (UNDCP) and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice



Division in the United Nations Office at Vienna and was renamed the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in 2002.

### *INTERPOL*

The International Criminal Police Organization, commonly known as Interpol, is an international organization that facilitates worldwide police cooperation and crime control.

## Sources

- Browne, Evie. “Border Insecurity in North Africa.” *GSDRC*, 3 Aug. 2015, [gsdrc.org/publications/border-insecurity-in-north-africa/](https://gsdrc.org/publications/border-insecurity-in-north-africa/).
- “Counter Migrant Smuggling.” *International Organization for Migration*, 18 May 2021, [www.iom.int/counter-migrant-smuggling](https://www.iom.int/counter-migrant-smuggling).
- “Drug Trafficking and Use in Libya and North Africa.” *Global Initiative*, 10 Oct. 2020, [globalinitiative.net/analysis/drug-trafficking-and-use-in-libya-and-north-africa-2/](https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/drug-trafficking-and-use-in-libya-and-north-africa-2/).
- ENACTAfrica.org. “What Drives Illicit Trade in North Africa?” *ENACT Africa*, 5 July 2019, [enactafrica.org/enact-observer/what-drives-illicit-trade-in-north-africa](https://enactafrica.org/enact-observer/what-drives-illicit-trade-in-north-africa).**
- Ford, Alessandro. “War-Torn North Africa Is Becoming a Major Hub for Smuggled Cocaine.” *Business Insider*, Business Insider, 11 Jan. 2021, [www.businessinsider.com/libya-north-africa-becoming-major-hub-for-smuggled-cocaine-2021-1](https://www.businessinsider.com/libya-north-africa-becoming-major-hub-for-smuggled-cocaine-2021-1).
- Gallien, Max. “Analysis | In North Africa's Borderlands, Smuggling Has Helped Keep a Fragile Peace. Now It's under Threat.” *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 19 June 2019, [www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/06/19/north-africas-borderlands-smuggling-has-helped-keep-fragile-peace-now-its-under-threat/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/06/19/north-africas-borderlands-smuggling-has-helped-keep-fragile-peace-now-its-under-threat/).**
- “North Africa.” *Mixed Migration Centre*, 25 May 2021, [mixedmigration.org/regions/north-africa/](https://mixedmigration.org/regions/north-africa/).
- “Overview.” *United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime*, [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/glo-act/overview.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/glo-act/overview.html).**
- “People Smuggling – the Issues.” *INTERPOL*, [www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/People-smuggling/People-smuggling-the-issues](https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/People-smuggling/People-smuggling-the-issues).
- Person, gisAction - a TeamDEV brand. “WEST AFRICA, NORTH AFRICA AND THE CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN.” *ArcGIS StoryMaps*, Esri, 24 May 2021, [storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/9b5bd3d4d6624d44b5ddae6aa5af1da3](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/9b5bd3d4d6624d44b5ddae6aa5af1da3).
- “Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants.” *OHCHR*, [www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/TransnationalOrganizedCrime.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/TransnationalOrganizedCrime.aspx).



TIANMUN