Four dead, 16 missing from capsized raft off Spain's coast

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Madrid, November 29 (RHC)-- Spanish authorities have rescued 58 migrants from another failed expedition trying to cross the Mediterranean. Three bodies were recovered from the water and another died after being taken to shore, while 16 more migrants are missing, as they attempted to cross from North Africa to Europe in a small raft, a spokeswoman for Spain's coastguard reported.

European and Spanish authorities deployed boats and a plane in the search for the bodies that were not found, 58 were rescued. They are also tracking another craft carrying 78 migrants that are believed to have set off from Morocco on Tuesday night, News Agency Reuters reported.

Sea-borne migration to the continent has decreased since peaking in 2015 but thousands still attempt the dangerous Mediterranean crossing every year, looking to escape poverty and conflict in their home countries.

The latest group was brought to Spain's North African enclave of Melilla, where a Reuters photographer saw survivors being helped ashore and given medical assistance by the Red Cross. Wrapped in thermal blankets, some of the migrants appeared to be in a state of shock after their ordeal.

According to the International Organization for Migration before these deaths, at least 1,136 migrants had already died or gone missing at sea so far this 2019. "Events of the past few days prove once more that crossing the Mediterranean is still extremely dangerous," the Director of

the IOM Coordination Office for the Mediterranean Laurence Hart said.

On Sunday, Italian authorities saved 149 people from a capsized dinghy off the island of Lampedusa. The bodies of five women were retrieved and several others remain unaccounted for. Meanwhile, Spanish charity ships Open Arms and Aita Mari rescued more than 140 migrants from rafts off the Libyan coast last week and transported them to Italy.

As of 2019, close to 900,000 asylum seekers in the European Union are waiting to have their claims processed, according to figures from the European statistics office.
Edited by Ed Newman