



IFRC | Secretary General, Elhadj As Sy, on the latest tragic loss of life in the Mediterranean Sea

20 April 2015

The deaths on Saturday night of hundreds of migrants in the Mediterranean Sea are an illustration of the global indifference about the plight of migrants, and the factors that force people to leave their homes in search of safety, a better future or to simply recover their human dignity.

Every time a boat sinks a part of humanity drowns and we are haunted by the knowledge that it could have been prevented. Search and rescue operations need to be scaled-up, but much more can also be done, before people make the decision to put their lives in danger, placing them in the hands of people smugglers.

Protecting people on the move is a collective responsibility. Anyone involved in these journeys – including authorities in countries of origin, transit and destination – have a fundamental duty to respect human dignity and to avoid any action that puts the lives of these people at risk.

We call on all parties to act decisively to stop further loss of lives.

We call on all States to show solidarity and facilitate access for all people searching for safety.

We call on the international community to intensify efforts to inform would-be migrants of the risks they face from human trafficking and dangerous sea crossings.

We call on authorities to hold those involved in human smuggling and trafficking to account.

We call for a new global commitment to tackle the root causes of migration, that include conflict, discrimination and economic inequality.

Let's put a halt to the indifference that is turning the Mediterranean into a vast graveyard.

IFRC Secretary General Elhadj As Sy will travel to Catania, Sicily, tomorrow (21 April) to visit with Italian Red Cross volunteers and staff who have been at the frontline of the humanitarian response to this continuing crisis.

He will participate in a press conference with Italian Red Cross President Francesco Rocca at the Italian Red Cross Catania Branch office (via Etna, 353 Catania) at 15:00 local time.