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# AFRICA/LIBYA - The report of the Council of Europe on the death of 63 migrants at sea in March 2011 confirms the information given at the time by Fides

Tripoli (Agenzia Fides) - The Council of Europe has recognized in its report the responsibilities of Italy, NATO, Spain and Malta, regarding the death of 63 people (including women and children), who died of hunger and thirst in March 2011, while the seven-meter boat on which they were packed drifted in the waters of the Mediterranean. The report, titled "Lives lost in the Mediterranean: Who is responsible?", on April 24 was voted by the Council of Europe with 108 votes in favor, 36 against and 7 abstentions. In the text the responsibilities of NATO and Italy (but also Spain and Malta) is highlighted in the migrant boat tragedy which left from the port of Tripoli in March 2011 and remained 16
days on the high seas at the mercy of the current, without any intervention.
The incident was reported to Fides by His Exc. Mgr. Giovanni Innocenzo Martinelli, Apostolic Vicar of Tripoli (see Fides 15/04/2011), who had said that on April 14, 2011 a dozen people had been rescued on the beach of Tripoli, "the only survivors of a group of 70 people who had left with a boat to Europe," he told Fides. "The majority died, others become weary and tired, on the beach. They were Ethiopians, Muslims and Christians. The local police, after rescueing them, imprisoned them briefly and then released them. At that point they turned to us for assistance."
Archbishop Martinelli also added: "The thing that surprised me about the stories of these survivors, is that at one point a helicopter flew over the boat, when it was adrift in high seas. A few bottles of water and food were launched from the helicopter, then it vanished. We do not know who owned the aircraft, which had the initials "Army". It could certainly not be Libyan, because of the no-fly zone ". The report found the story of the survivors of this last circumstance credible. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 25/4/2012)

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