

MAIN QUESTIONS

What do we mean by “environmental refugees”?

Is the label of environmental or climate refugees of any use?

What pushes migrants and refugees out of their countries?

How many are the environmental migrants or refugees?

What is the EU policy on migrants and refugees? And what are the main criticisms to such policies?

Are there different perspectives?

ENVIRONMENTAL REFUGEES ACCORDING TO ESSAM EL-HINNAWI

people “who have been forced to leave their traditional habitat, either temporarily or permanently, because of a marked environmental disruption (natural and/or caused by human activity such as industrial accidents) or who have been permanently displaced by large economic developments or the processing and deposit of toxic residues, putting their existence at risk and/or seriously affecting their quality of life”

ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRANT ACCORDING TO IOM

“Environmental migrants are persons or groups of persons, who, for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad”

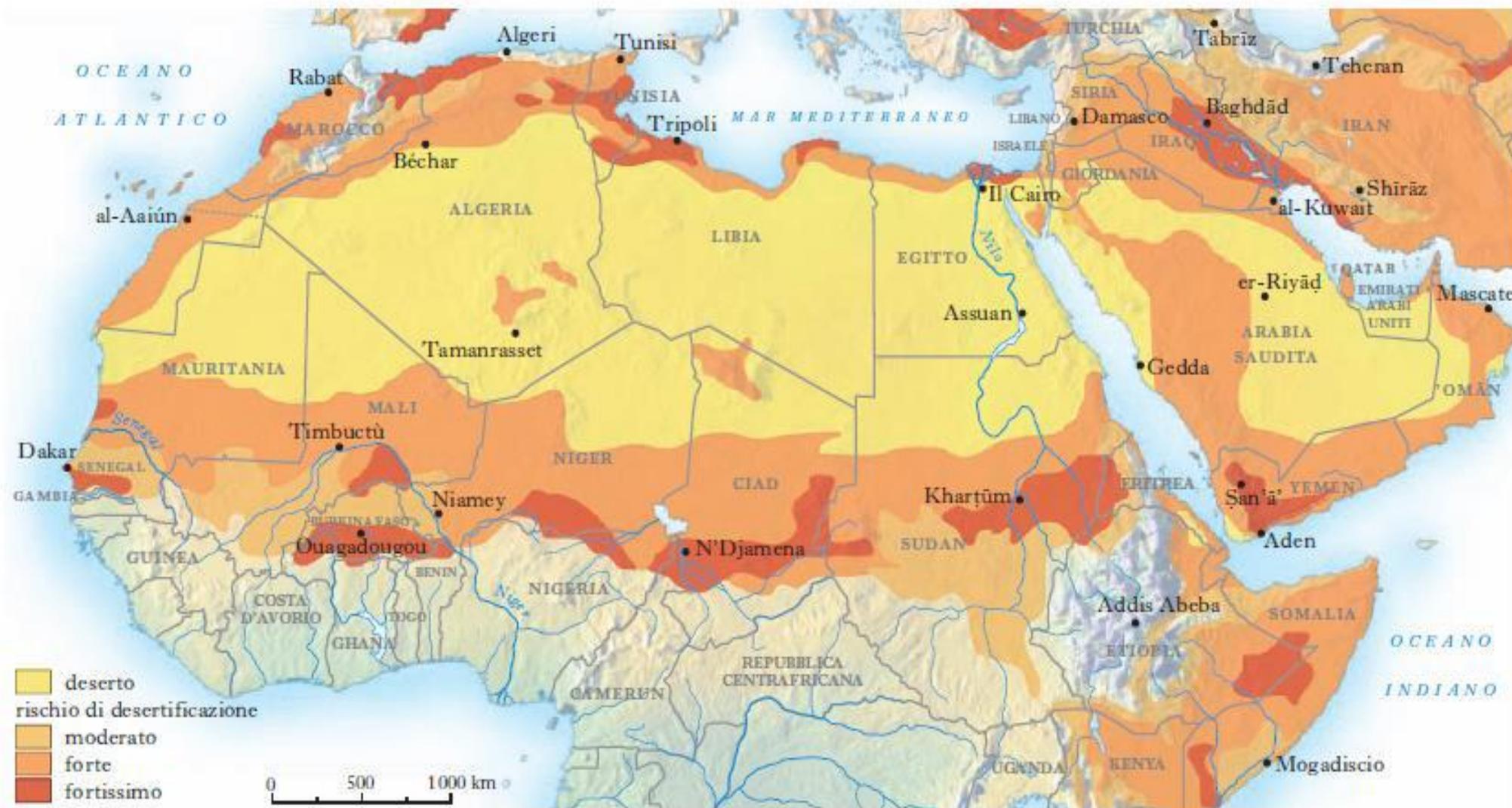
WHAT PUSHES ENVIRONMENTAL REFUGEES OUT OF THEIR COUNTRY?

Extreme environmental events like earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, drought, famine, etc.;

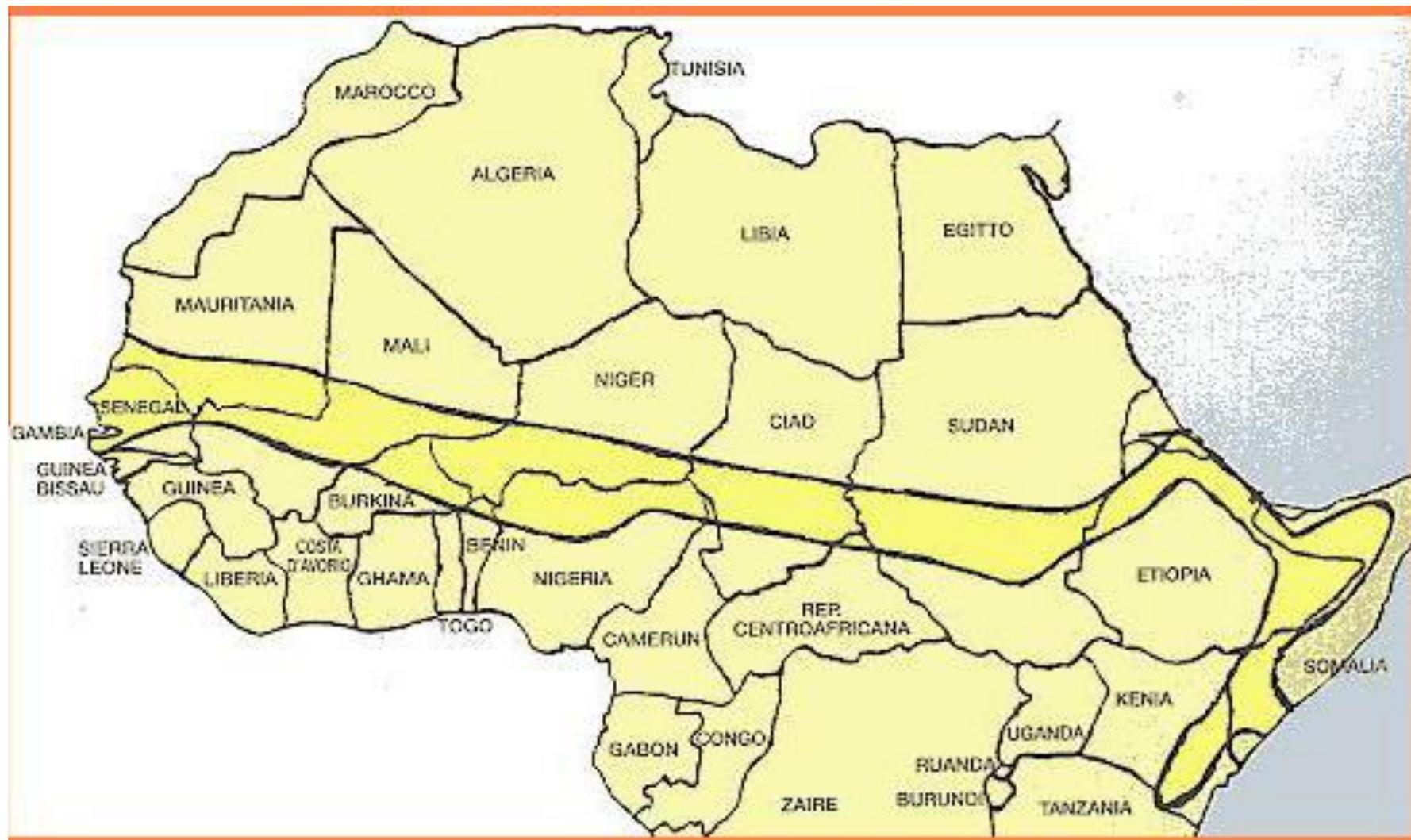
Slow degradation of the environment year after year, like desertification, rise of sea level, exhaustion of water reservoirs (all phenomena resulting from climate change);

Human interventions that change the state of an area, like mines, gas and oil pits, land or water grabbing, construction of big infrastructures like dams, pipelines, railways, roads, tourist resorts, urban development or big shows like Olympic games or international exhibitions.

MAP OF DESERTIFICATION IN NORTHERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA

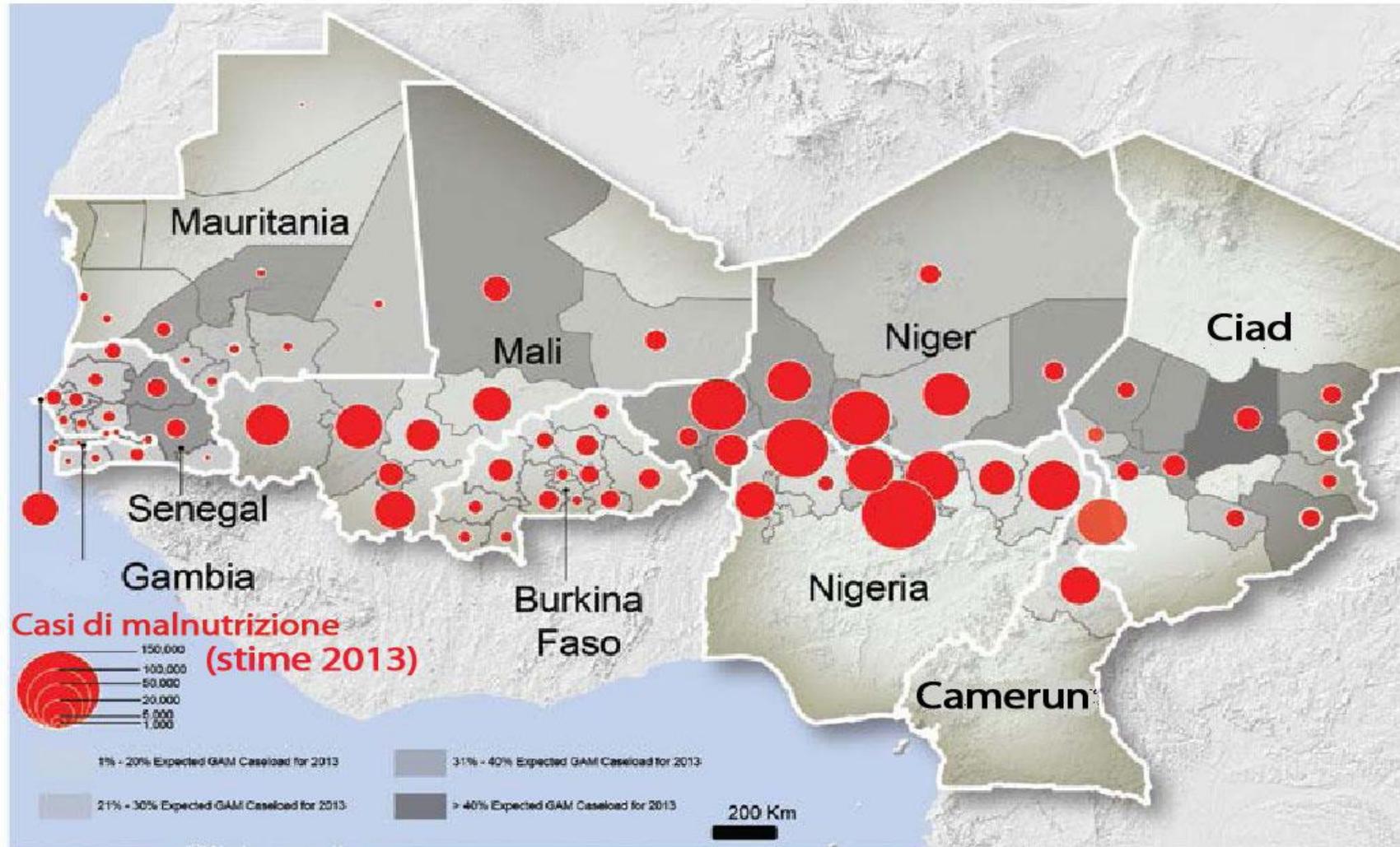


BELT OF THE MAIN SOCIALAND POLITICAL CRISIS



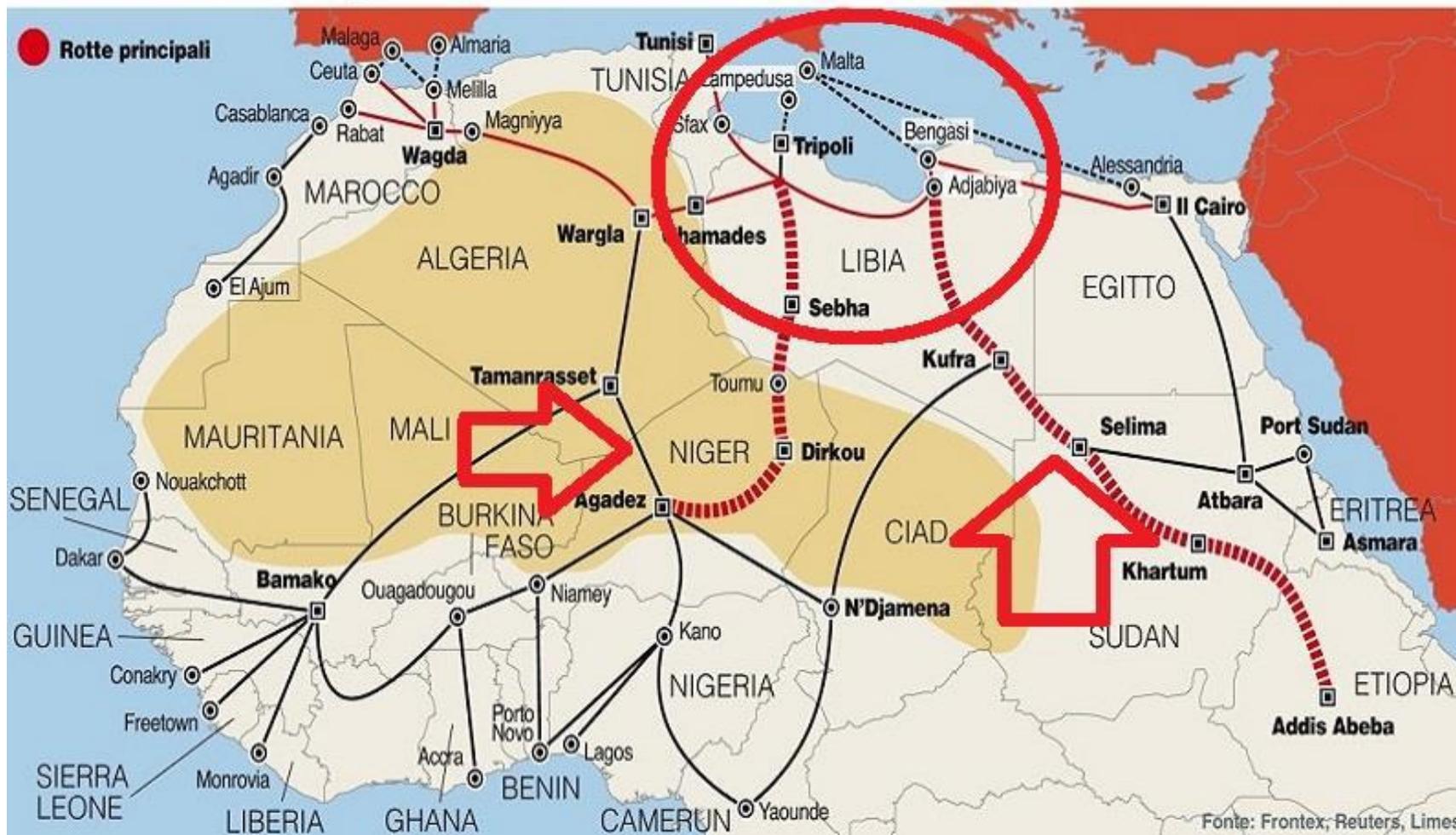
MAP OF FAMINE IN SAHEL

Sahel: la mappa della fame



AFROMEDITERRANEAN MIGRATION PATHWAYS

Le rotte delle migrazioni afro-mediterranee



PENTAGON PREDICTION ON WAR AGAINST MIGRANTS

The next wars will be fought for survival reasons. In the next 20 years a “significant drop” of the planet’s carrying capacity of supporting the existing population will become apparent.

Millions of people will die because of wars and famine until the inhabitants of the Earth are reduced to a sustainable quantity.

The richest areas like United States and Europe will become “virtual fortresses” in order to hinder the entry of millions of migrants expelled from lands submerged or not any more able to produce food for lack of water.

Waves of refugees on the boats are going to create significant problems.

Riots and conflict are going to break down in Africa and India.

Government not able to guarantee the basic resources and the essential services, and to defend their own borders are due to be swept away by chaos and terrorism.

THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE MAIN DAMS

Three Gorges dam (China): 1,2 million

Danjiangkou dam (China): 340.000

Narmada dams (India): 3.200 villagess, 250.000

**Upper Krishna dam (India): 176 villages, 93.200 families,
300.000**

Shuikou and Yantan dam (China): 180.000

Itaparica dam (Brazil): 40.000

Kedung Ombo dam (Indonesia): 32.000

Nangbeto dam (Togo): 10.600

SOCIAL IMPACT OF SOME ORGANIZED EVENTS

Olimpic games Seul (1988): 720.000

Olimpic games Beijing (2008): more than 1 million

Expo Shangai (2010): 400.000

500 year from Discovery of America Santo

Domingo (1992): 180.000

1. REJECTING AS MANY MIGRANT AS POSSIBLE

First: Europe must reject as many refugees as possible: there is no place for them inside the boundaries of the Union. The main tool to do so is the distinction between refugees fleeing wars or persecution, whom are given the rights to apply for international protection, and economic migrants, who do not have these rights.

2. SELECTING REFUGEES ON THE BASIS OF THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Second: Hot spots in Greek and Italian ports, where disembarkation of people rescued in the Mediterranean sea occurs. In these hot spots the selection between war refugees and economic migrants takes place on the basis of the countries of origin, classified as safe or unsafe. Countries like Afghanistan, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, Ethiopia are classified as safe States; therefore refugees coming from there are classified as economic migrants without any further inquire and forced to repatriation.

3. FOSTER REPATRIATION THROUGH SPECIAL AGREEMENTS

Third: In order to foster repatriation of migrants and refugees not covered by the Geneva Convention, several agreements with the Governments of their States of origin (like Turkey, Sudan, Morocco, Afghanistan) have been signed or are on the pipeline to be signed, paying several billion euros for this swap. This type of swap is at the core of the *Migration Compact* put forward by the Italian Premier Matteo Renzi.

DEMOGRAPHY

First, demography: Europe needs to contain its demographic losses, currently amounting to almost three million people every year. By 2050, we will face a lack of almost 100 million persons that can only be balanced by a huge influx of new immigrants. Otherwise, the overwhelming majority of old and retired people will be confronted with the lack of young workers to finance their pensions and sustain their livelihoods.

ECONOMY

Second, economy: before the financial crisis of 2008, more than one million people per year crossed the boundaries of the Union finding a job or some other form of inclusion in its economic and social context. So, what happened since then to justify the fact that a million of refugees coming in 2015 mainly from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan were seen as an unbearable invasion? European Union has embraced an economic policy, referred to as “austerity”, that has created more than 25 million unemployed among European citizens. We won’t come out of this crisis without policies aimed at the creation of millions of new employments for both European and foreign unemployed workers.

GEOPOLITICS

Third, geopolitics: in order to stop or contain the streaming of refugees, we need overall to restore peace in the countries where they come from, starting with Syria. But rejecting the refugees and returning them to their countries means handing them to the Governments or the armed forces they were fleeing from, thus enlarging the areas of insecurity, and causing the streams of further migration.

PEACE

The main issue is to restore peace in the countries of origin of the refugees. In each conflict, both in Africa and Asia, global powers are deeply involved. But EU doesn't play almost any role, even if several member States are directly engaged with their own troops. We cannot rely on the goodwill of our Governments. A strong movement for peace should impose a new course to them.

THE RIGHTS OF THE NATURE

But “Peace is not possible without a fair development. And a fair development is not possible without a sustainable use of our environment” has been said by Wangari Maathai, Nobel prize for Peace in 2009. We must give the ecosystems a regenerating possibility according to their own resilience patterns, i.e. recognize that Nature has its own rights.

The social justice toward the human beings is directly linked with the justice toward Nature. Our goals should not be growth or development, but peace with Nature, good life, *buen vivir*.

IMMIGRATION AS WEALTH

Third, we must realize that the presence of different cultures and habits in our countries is not a threat, but a wealth. Nobody would think differently if a huge stream of tourists was at stake. We must realize that the contribution of a large presence of migrants and refugees among us, well included in our social institutions, could bring much more benefits than tourists can do.

A GREAT EURO-MEDITERRANEAN COMMUNITY

Fourth. People fleeing wars and disasters are often eager to return to their countries if only the course of social and ecological degradation could be inverted. That could be done by preventing any further worsening of global climate and hindering any further land grabbing or ravage carried on by financial and economic interests mainly managed by Western (and now also Chinese) businesses. This will give local communities the time and the means to restore their land and revive their social life. A great turnover across different continents could then take place in both directions, enlarging the boundaries of Europe to a great Euro-mediterranean community.