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## smuggling of migrants – global news

### february 2015

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This monthly newsletter summarises news items and media commentary from some of world's leading media outlets. The Migrants Smuggling Working Group takes no responsibility for the content and accuracy of the information provides in these news items.

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### AMERICAS

#### CANADA

#### ***BC Civil Liberties Association to argue human smuggling cases in Supreme Court – 15 February 2015***

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/bc-civil-liberties-association-to-argue-human-smuggling-cases-in-supreme-court/article23010829/>

The Supreme Court of Canada this week is set to hear arguments in a number of cases calling into question the reach of the country's human smuggling laws.

#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### ***Border Patrol says smuggling attempts thwarted by air, land and sea – 9 February 2015***

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-air-land-sea-20150209-story.html>

Sunday night, four suspected illegal immigrants were seized on Silver Strand Beach in Coronado. The four had been dropped off on the beach by two smugglers on jet skis, the Border Patrol said.

#### ***Three women plead guilty to smuggling Armenian nationals into the U.S. – 12 February 2015***

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln--armenian-smuggling-20150212-story.html>

Three women from Glendale pleaded guilty Thursday to smuggling Armenian nationals into the U.S. from Mexico. Varduhi Avagyan, 42, Meri Avetisyan, 40, and Maria Yanakopulus, 57, pleaded guilty in San Diego federal court to being part of an international smuggling organization that charged up to \$18,000 per person.

#### ***Key Issues in the States' Lawsuit Over Immigration – 18 February 2015***

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/02/18/us/politics/ap-us-immigration-lawsuit-news-guide.html>

President Barack Obama's plan to shield more than 4 million immigrants living in the country illegally from deportation is on hold after a judge temporarily blocked the effort.

## **Two Smugglers Who Left Pregnant Woman to Die in California Sentenced – 19 February 2015**

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/02/19/world/americas/19reuters-usa-california-immigration.html>

Two men who left a pregnant woman to die in an isolated mountain region of southern California after they smuggled her across the U.S.-Mexico border were sentenced to federal prison on Wednesday, officials said.

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## ASIA-PACIFIC

### CHINA

#### **Islamic State 'executed three Uygur deserters from China'**

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1702968/islamic-state-has-executed-three-deserters-china-chinese-state-run>

Shanghai police reported last month that they had broken up a gang trying to smuggle Muslim ethnic-Uygurs out of the country on false passports. Some of the nine Uygurs arrested had confessed they were ultimately travelling to Syria, police said, one of the main battlegrounds in the Islamic State insurgency.

### MACAU

#### **Boat Capsizes Off Macau, 15 People Missing – 26 February 2015**

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/02/26/world/asia/ap-as-macau-boat-capsized.html>

A suspected people-smuggling boat carrying 19 people capsized off the Chinese territory of Macau on Friday, leaving 15 people missing, the Macau government and Chinese state media said.

#### **Boat capsizes off Macau, 15 people missing**

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/02/27/boat-capsizes-macau-15-people-missing.html>

Chinese state media say a suspected people-smuggling boat carrying 19 people has capsized off the Chinese territory of Macau, and 15 people are still missing.

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## MIDDLE EAST

### SYRIA

#### **Meeting Turkey's camera-shy people**

<http://www.aljazeera.com/blogs/middleeast/2015/01/100126.html>

Smugglers first use their Facebook page to establish contact with Syrians who wish to travel to Turkey.

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## EUROPE

### AUSTRIA

#### **Austria Tells Kosovars Not to Waste Time Seeking Asylum – 20 February 2015**

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/02/20/world/europe/20reuters-kosovo-austria-migrants.html>

Austria published a full-page appeal in Kosovo's biggest daily newspaper on Friday telling Kosovars they were wasting their time and money trying to win asylum in the EU, responding to a sudden surge in migration from the impoverished Balkan state.

HUNGARY

**German Police Sent to Serbia-Hungary Border to Stem Kosovo Exodus – 12 February 2015**

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/02/12/world/europe/12reuters-germany-kosovo-migrants.html>

Germany said on Thursday it was sending 20 police officers to the border between Hungary and Serbia to help control a surge in the number of asylum seekers heading into the European Union and ultimately to Germany with its generous welfare benefits.

ITALY

**More Than 300 Migrants Died This Week Trying to Reach Italy: U.N. Agency – 11 February 2015**

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/02/11/world/africa/11reuters-italy-migrants.html>

More than 300 people died trying to cross the sea from Africa to Italy this week, the U.N. refugee agency said on Wednesday, adding pressure on Europe to expand a border operation that lacks a clear mandate to save lives.

**At Least 300 Migrants Feared Dead Off Italian Coast, U.N. Says – 11 February 2015**

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/02/11/world/europe/ap-eu-italy-migrant-deaths.html>

Some 300 migrants who tried to cross the frigid Mediterranean in open, rubber boats, were reported missing Wednesday by survivors as the U.N. refugee agency and other aid groups sharply criticized the new EU rescue operation as insufficient and costing lives.

**Rescued African Migrants Recount Ordeal in Mediterranean – 11 February 2015**

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/12/world/europe/about-300-migrants-said-to-have-died-crossing-mediterranean.html>

Survivors rescued off the Libyan coast by the Italian Coast Guard gave harrowing accounts of small boats packed with migrants that were overwhelmed by high waves, which washed scores of people overboard to their deaths in cold Mediterranean waters, humanitarian organizations said Wednesday.

**Some 300 migrants missing at sea, feared dead: UN refugee agency – 11 February 2015**

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/some-300-migrants-missing-at-sea-feared-dead-un-refugee-agency/article22907019/>

More than 300 people died attempting to cross the sea from Africa to Italy this week, the UN refugee agency said on Wednesday, adding pressure on Europe to expand a border operation that does not have a clear mandate to save lives.

**Hundreds feared dead after boats sink off Italy – 12 February 2015**

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/02/hundreds-missing-migrant-boats-sink-italy-150211092303091.html>

An estimated 300 people are feared dead after attempting to reach Italy from Libya in three inflatable rafts, the UN refugee agency said after speaking to survivors rescued by Italy's coastguard in the past few days.

**Italy rescues thousands of migrants at sea – 15 February 2015**

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/02/italy-migrants-sea-150215220834838.html>

The Italian coast guard has rescued more than 2,100 migrants in a major rescue operation in the sea between Europe and North Africa.

### ***Italy: Migrant Trafficking Could Be Financing Terrorists – 24 February 2015***

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/02/24/world/europe/ap-eu-italy-terrorism-migrants.html>

Italy's top organized-crime fighter has warned of a danger that international terrorism could help finance itself through migrant trafficking.

KOSOVO

### ***Dramatic Surge in Kosovars Crossing Illegally Into EU – 4 February 2015***

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/02/04/world/europe/04reuters-kosovo-eu-migrants.html>

The European Union is experiencing a steep rise in the number of Kosovo citizens smuggling themselves into the affluent bloc, with 10,000 filing for asylum in Hungary in just one month this year compared to 6,000 for the whole of 2013.

### ***Kosovo Considering Pre-2009 Debt Write-Off to Tackle Unrest – 5 February 2015***

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/02/05/world/05reuters-kosovo-debts.html>

Kosovo may write off a range of debts racked up by citizens before 2009, the government said on Thursday in a move to tackle widespread dissatisfaction fuelling unrest and a new wave of emigration to western Europe.

### ***Kosovo President Urges End to Illegal Migration – 6 February 2015***

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/02/06/world/europe/ap-eu-kosovo-migration.html>

President Atifete Jahjaga urged Kosovars Friday to stay at home, following reports that the number of people crossing illegally into the European Union in search of prosperity has soared in recent weeks.

### ***Kosovo Helpless to Stem Exodus of Illegal Migrants – 6 February 2015***

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/02/06/world/europe/06reuters-kosovo-eu-immigration.html>

More than 15 years after NATO bombs wrested Kosovo from Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic, the young Balkan country is witnessing a dramatic surge in the number of its citizens smuggling themselves across Serbia's border into Hungary to reach the European Union.

### ***Thousands flee economic despair in Kosovo for EU countries, welcome or not – 15 February 2015***

<http://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-kosovo-refugees-20150215-story.html>

Sixteen years after the war in Kosovo sent hundreds of thousands of refugees streaming across the border, another exodus is underway here. Instead of fleeing conflict, Kosovars are now seeking to escape unemployment, and despair. They are leaving by the tens of thousands, making their way illegally into European Union countries to look for a better future.

SERBIA

### ***Afghan refugees stranded in freezing Serbian conditions – 9 February 2015***

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2015/02/afghan-refugees-stranded-freezing-serbian-conditions-150208102521058.html>

Escaping continuing violence, many Afghans have fled their war-torn country looking for a better life in the EU. Hundreds of refugees have ended up in the town of Subotica, northern Serbia, as they wait for human traffickers to smuggle them across the border into Hungary, an EU member state.

***Van Carrying Migrants Swerves Off Road in Serbia, 40 Injured – 24 February 2015***

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/02/24/world/europe/ap-eu-serbia-migrants-injured.html>

A van packed with migrants has swerved off a road in southern Serbia, injuring 40 people, some of them seriously.

TURKEY

***Promise of Europe lures Syrians and Smugglers – 5 February 2015***

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/06/world/europe/promise-of-europe-lures-syrian-refugees-and-smugglers-to-turkish-coast.html>

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