

African migrants face perilous journey

by UPI

ROME - African migrants appear to be taking greater risks to reach Europe, despite a drop in reported numbers, it was reported Monday. Italy and Spain, often the initial destination for those fleeing Africa, report a decrease of one-third or more compared with last year, the International Herald Tribune reported. But the number of deaths, especially from drowning, has remained stable, suggesting that those who try to reach Europe face a more dangerous journey, said Fortress Europe, a migrant advocacy group. Part of the reason is smugglers are taking fewer chances, sending migrants off alone with compass, map and flashlight in smaller, rickety boats rather than stable vessels piloted by professional captains used in past years, Fortress Europe said. "It is clear people are still dying in very dramatic circumstances," said Erika Feller, a spokeswoman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

African migrants face perilous journey by UPI