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## Briefing Prepared for the Security Council

### I. The Mediterranean Sea

1. The Mediterranean Sea is a sea connected to the Atlantic Ocean, surrounded by the Mediterranean region. The Mediterranean Sea is almost entirely enclosed by land, dividing Southern Europe at its northern side from Africa at its southern side, and bordered by the Levant to the East
2. The Mediterranean is pivotal to global economies today, as it connects the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean via the Suez Canal. Much of the world's shipping passes through the region, both to and from Europe, and on its way to other regions of the World.

### II. The Refugee Crisis

1. Large numbers of people from Africa and the Middle East are attempting to make the passage from their home continents to Europe via small boats. They typically attempt the passage in the narrow central Mediterranean, where the sea is thinnest, being only 160kms wide between Tunis and Trapani.

2. Those making the trip are doing so illegally, yet, as a result of the conditions which they are attempting to escape, are considered refugees. These refugees are typically trying to escape war and violence in their home nations, or poverty and low quality of life. In comparison to their home nations, Europe provides a high quality of life and strong welfare system.
3. Often these refugees are transported by brutal people smugglers, and endure terrible conditions throughout the journey. These conditions are a result of both the conditions onboard the often unseaworthy vessels used to make the crossing, as well as due to extreme weather.
4. In 2014 alone, approximately 650,000 people sought political asylum in Europe. Of those, approximately 35 percent, roughly 220,000 of them were picked up either by military patrol ships, or merchant and private vessels, as they attempted to make the crossing.