**Drowned Syrian refugee boy washes up on Turkish resort beach, underlining Europe’s growing migration crisis**

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The image of a drowned little boy who washed up on a Turkish beach became the haunting symbol Wednesday of an [unfolding humanitarian crisis that is shaking Europe](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/3-arrested-71-dead-migrants-found-austria-truck-article-1.2340233).

Dressed in a bright red shirt and blue shorts, the toddler identified as 3-year-old Aylan Kurdi was found face down in the surf near the resort town of Bodrum.

Little Aylan was one of 17 [refugees from war-torn Syria](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/walking-dead-actor-helps-rescue-syrian-refugees-article-1.2294532) who set off in a dinghy in a desperate attempt to reach the Greek island of Kos and safety.

Turkish media reported they were from the Kurdish town of Kobani in northern Syria, which has seen fierce fighting between [bloodthirsty Islamic State militants](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/crime/isis-blasts-ancient-syrian-temple-article-1.2342864) and local Kurdish forces.

Aylan’s overcrowded dinghy overturned in the Aegean Sea and he drowned along with a dozen other frightened passengers, including his 5-year-old brother, Galip, and their mother, Rihan, 35, according to several published reports.

Their father reportedly survived.

None of them was wearing life jackets. And there was nothing the grim-faced Turkish police officer who found Aylan could do but gather the boy up in his arms and carry him off the beach.

The photo of Aylan rocketed around the world on Twitter bearing the hashtag, “KiyiyaVuranInsanlik,” Turkish for “humanity washed ashore.”

Two other brothers who were on the doomed dinghy also drowned — Zainb Ahmet-Hadi, 11, and his younger brother Hayder, just 9.

Their grief-stricken mother, Zeynep, clung to her surviving 7-year-old daughter, Rowad, at a Turkish hospital and wept bitter tears for her lost boys.

Some 11 million people — about half the population of Syria — have fled the country since fighting erupted in 2011, and more than 200,000 are believed dead.

This summer, [tens of thousands of frightened refugees](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/angelina-jolie-visits-turkey-honor-world-refugee-day-article-1.2266026) have descended on Turkey’s Aegean coast determined to make it to the nearby Greek islands — their gateway to the European Union.

Aid agencies estimate that about 2,000 people a day have made the short but perilous crossing. Many of them have become victims of cruel smugglers intent on cramming as many people as possible on their flimsy boats.

More than 2,500 people have died trying to cross the Mediterranean this year, according to the UNHCR, a United Nations refugee agency.

One survivor, Omer Mohsin, told local media the drowned Kurdish children were among the 175 people that were jammed on boats not meant to carry more than 10 people at a time.

“It sank almost as soon as we reached the open water,” said Mohsin, whose brother Bekir still has not been found. “It was pitch black. Those that couldn’t swim didn’t stand a chance.”

Mohsin said they paid about $2,300 apiece for the passage.

Kirk Day of the International Rescue Committee warned that some 200,000 Syrian refugees are likely to attempt the crossing over the next few months and tragedies like this are going to keep on happening unless something is done.

“Despite only being a few short miles, as we have seen the open-sea journey from Turkey to Greece is far from safe and will only become more dangerous as the weather turns this autumn,” Day said in a statement. “It is inevitable that we will see a further loss of life until Europe’s policies change.”

Europe has been inundated with hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees — in addition to the thousands more fleeing poverty and strife in parts of Africa.

But the 28-nation European Union is divided over how to deal with the crisis. Countries with struggling economies like Greece and Italy have pleaded for more help. And Germany, which is where the bulk of the asylum seekers hope to go, wants other countries to share the load.

“If Europe fails on the question of refugees, this close connection with universal civil rights ... will be destroyed and it won’t be the Europe we want,” German Chancellor Angela Merkel said.

But that’s been an especially hard sell in countries like Hungary, which many Syrians have been passing through on their way to Germany.

“We have to reinstate law and order at the borders of the European Union, including the border with Serbia,” Hungarian government spokesman Zoltan Kovacs said. “Without reestablishing law and order, it will be impossible to handle the influx of migrants.”

The [chaos was evident in Budapest on Wednesday](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/migrants-protest-budapest-station-police-block-travel-article-1.2345732) when hundreds of refugees trying to get to Germany battled police outside the main international train station.

On Hungary’s border with Serbia, hundreds of right-wing nationalist Jobbik party members screamed “Go back where you came from!” at terrified Syrians streaming into their country on train tracks.

“I am a mother, I am Hungarian, this is Hungary, and they have to go home,” said 57-year-old protester Aniko Cserep.

Hungarian police quickly intervened and many of the Syrians remained on the Serbian side of the border until the cops were gone and it was safe to cross into Hungary.

Elsewhere, the Syrians have gotten a far warmer reception.

In Germany, which expects to take in 800,000 refugees this year, Syrians arriving at the main train station in Munich were greeted by residents bearing food, clothing and other supplies.

In Iceland, a country of just 200,000, residents set up a Facebook page demanding that their reluctant government take in at least 5,000 Syrian refugees.

Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic have also opened their doors to several thousand Syrians — primarily Christian refugees who have suffered at the hands of ISIS.

“Today Christians who are being persecuted in a barbaric fashion in Syria deserve Christian countries like Poland to act fast to help them,” Polish Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz said.