

'Like a blowtorch': Mediterranean on fire as blazes spread across nine countries

'There is no magical defence mechanism,' says Greek prime minister as fires burn in northern Africa and southern Europe

Wildfires were burning in at least nine countries across the Mediterranean on Tuesday as blazes spread in Croatia, Italy and Portugal, with thousands of firefighters in Europe and north Africa working to contain flames stoked by high temperatures, dry conditions and strong winds.

At least 34 people were killed in **Algeria**, where 8,000 firefighters on Tuesday battled blazes across the tinder-dry north. Fires burned in a total of 15 provinces, leading to the evacuation of more than 1,500 people from their properties.

Witnesses described fleeing walls of flames that raged "like a blowtorch", destroying homes and coastal resorts and turning vast forest areas into blackened wastelands.

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