

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001004/19
to the Commission
Jörg Meuthen (EFDD)
(26 February 2019)

Subject: Regional disembarkation platforms for people picked up at sea

In June 2018, the Council endorsed the idea of regional disembarkation platforms for people picked up at sea, in line with earlier initiatives. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) announced that it would submit plans to the EU. However, various media have reported that the AU is pressurising coastal states into not cooperating with the EU.

What progress has been made with these plans, to the Commission's knowledge?

With which states has the Commission conducted negotiations on establishing these platforms? What stage have the negotiations reached?

Does the AU's blocking policy have financial implications for its member states in terms of EU development policy?

Answer given by Mr Avramopoulos on behalf of the European Commission
(7 June 2019)

Following the June 2018 Council conclusions, the EU participated in an international roundtable on search and rescue and disembarkation in the Mediterranean region organised jointly by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration in Geneva in July 2018. This conference convened international organisations and States with an access to the Mediterranean Sea to reflect jointly on how to address the current challenges around search and rescue operations and the need to save lives in the Mediterranean. The EU is engaged with all its partners around the Mediterranean to support a comprehensive approach to migration management and fulfilment of obligations under international law. Together with the United Nations Refugee Agency and the International Organisation for Migration the Commission continues to work with partners to find mutually agreeable effective solutions.

In its December 2018 Communication ⁽¹⁾, the Commission called for putting in place temporary arrangements as an immediate coordinated approach to disembarkation in the EU which would demonstrate solidarity among EU Member States and could facilitate cooperation with regional partners. Discussions with the Member States on temporary arrangements are still ongoing.

The EU has a long-standing and close partnership with the African Union, including through the EU-African Union-United Nations Taskforce to address the migratory situation in Libya and along the Central Mediterranean route to implement life-saving measures for those in need.

When it comes to development policy and cooperation, the EU is supporting partner countries in Africa, including in North Africa, who have demonstrated their commitment to engage further in improving their migration and border management capacity, including for patrolling their coastline and maritime borders, which is expected to also positively contribute to reducing irregular migration and loss of lives in the Mediterranean.

⁽¹⁾ COM(2018) 798 final of 4.12.2018.