



Strasbourg, 21 October 2025

Addressed to:

***Ms Dubravka Šuica***, *European Commissioner for the Mediterranean*

***Mr Magnus Brunner***, *European Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs*

Subject: **Urgent need to halt EU support to Libyan entities involved in migration management and gross human rights violations**

*Dear Commissioner Šuica,*

*Dear Commissioner Brunner,*

As Members of the European Parliament, we are writing urgently regarding the European Commission's continued support for Libyan forces, following the unprecedented attacks on European humanitarian workers and survivors of shipwreck in August and September carried out by the Libyan Coast Guard in a boat provided through an EU-funded programme.

Despite a long record of violence against humanitarians and people in distress at sea both before and after the latest shootings, and the Libyan Coast Guard and other militias' role in the forcible transfer of people seeking safety to places where they face extortion, trafficking, slavery, violence, and death, the European Union continues to provide support to Libyan authorities involved in migration management, including the Libyan Coast Guard and the Directorate for Combating Illegal Migration (DCIM).

This continued cooperation is a flagrant misuse of EU funds, runs contrary to the European acquis, and furthermore endangers the fragile Libyan peace process, increases instability at the EU's maritime border, and undermines the EU's credibility as a foreign policy actor.

Since 2017, the Commission has been providing material, technical and training support to Libyan authorities under the *EU Trust Fund for Africa (EUTFa)* and the *Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)*. Specifically, the Commission has financed the following projects: Support to integrated border and migration management in Libya (SIBMMIL) Phases 1 and 2, Support to Border Management Institutions in Libya and Tunisia and Support to Cross-Border Cooperation and Integrated Border Management in

North Africa. All these projects have as beneficiaries the Libyan Coast and Border Guards and the DCIM, among others.

TEU Article 21 establishes that EU external action shall be guided by the principles of democracy, human rights and rule of law. NDICI Regulation Article 29 excludes from funding any activities that may result in human rights violations. Despite the mounting evidence, the Commission has so far failed to provide evidence that border management projects in Libya comply with the *do-no-harm* principle. Even after a formal request by the European Ombudsman it refused to release the findings of its monitoring in a lack of transparency that constitutes [maladministration](#).

The Parliament's position on this issue is that the Commission and Member States shall not indirectly facilitate illegal pullbacks by the Libyan border or security apparatus and the returning of people to inhumane camps in Libya, and not to fund and cooperate with Libyan stakeholders against which there are credible allegations of grave violations and involvement in human trafficking ([2021/2064\(INI\)](#)).

In 2023, the [UN Independent Fact-Finding Mission to Libya](#) found that the DCIM and the Libyan Coast Guard were involved in gross human rights violations including human trafficking, forced labour, starvation, sexual violence and torture to such a scale that may amount to crimes against humanity. The Mission also called for an immediate halt to all direct and indirect support to those actors. In 2024 the [European Court of Auditors](#) denounced how EUTFA projects in Libya failed to address human rights risks and lacked procedures to report allegations of human rights abuses.

According [to Italian judicial authorities](#), the interceptions at sea conducted by the Libyan Coast Guard cannot legally qualify as rescue operations. Furthermore, the Libyan Coast Guard itself is deeply involved in human trafficking and smuggling, a fact acknowledged by the Commission in 2023, when admitted that it had been infiltrated by organized crime. The Libyan Coast Guard has repeatedly threatened and attacked civil society search-and-rescue vessels and violently intercepted boats carrying people fleeing Libya, often in international waters, forcibly returning them back to Libya. There, they are delivered to DCIM, where they face arbitrary detention, torture, rape, enslavement and other inhumane acts.

**Eight years of EU-funded training and equipment have not improved the human rights record of these actors**, they have just emboldened them to commit further abuses. The recent shootings at civilian rescue vessels from EU-funded patrol boats, endangering the lives of EU citizens and shipwreck survivors, is the latest manifestation of this ongoing pattern of violence. On August 25th, an EU-Funded Corrubia-Class boat from the Libyan Coast Guard opened fire with assault rifles against the SAR boat [Ocean Viking](#). Again on September 26th, the [Sea-Watch 5](#) search and rescue ship was also shot by Libyan Coast Guard from another EU-funded patrol

boat. If these attacks continue, it is a matter of time that a shot fired by an EU-trained Coast Guard, driving an EU-funded patrol boat, kills an EU citizen for the sole crime of rescuing lives at sea.

In light of these grave developments, we call on the European Commission to:

1. **Publicly condemn** the violent actions of the Libyan Coast Guard against Search and Rescue actors in the Central Mediterranean
2. **Immediately halt all forms of support** — financial, technical, or operational — to the Libyan Coast Guard, the DCIM and any other Libyan entity implicated in severe human rights violations, in line with Article 29 of the NDICI Regulation.
3. **Redirect that support** to civil society organizations and UN entities actually supporting and protecting migrants in Libya
4. **Promote the establishment of a state-led, EU-coordinated search-and-rescue mission** in the Central Mediterranean, ensuring compliance with international maritime and human rights law.
5. **Urge the Italian Government** to suspend the renewal of its 2017 *Memorandum of Understanding* with Libya, and call on other Member States to refrain from concluding similar agreements.
6. **Refrain from engaging with non-recognized entities** on migration management such as forces in Eastern Libya under the control of warlord Khalifa Haftar

We agree with the Commission that the EU should remain engaged in Libya, and in fact deepen that engagement. This should be based around supporting the peace process, strengthening human rights standards, and assisting the Libyan people to overcome the consequences of years of conflict, a fragile economy, and degraded ecosystems. Peace and security in the region cannot be achieved through a transactional foreign policy focused only on migration control. Upholding the EU's legal and moral obligations requires ending all complicity in Libyan security forces' abuses and prioritizing the protection of human life and dignity at sea and on land.

We remain at your disposal to discuss these issues further and urge you to take swift and concrete action.

Yours sincerely,

**Matjaž NEMEC**, Member of the European Parliament, S&D

**Mounir SATOURI**, Member of the European Parliament, Greens/EFA

**Marta TEMIDO**, Member of the European Parliament, S&D

**Tineke STRIK**, Member of the European Parliament, Greens/EFA

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