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Press Release

25.02.2019

German Government confirms: Libyan authorities not contactable for maritime rescue

“Any further training of the so-called ‘coastguard’ in Libya does not address the actual problem and merely serves to establish these troops as the bouncers of the European Union. According to the Federal Foreign Office, the crews have had human rights and international law explained to them, along with maritime rescue and the use of maritime communication channels. This knowledge is not applied however, and the Libyan units continue to carry out unprofessional, brutal and often fatal missions. That is why cooperation with these troops must be put to a stop”, demanded European policy spokesman for The Left Party parliamentary group in the Bundestag, Andrej Hunko.

The Federal Government confirms that there are “difficulties in the availability electronically and by telephone” of the Libyan ‘coastguard’. The same was also said to apply “regarding language barriers”. The EUNAVFOR MED military mission has initiated a “monitoring mechanism” to tackle problems such as these, with the aim of evaluating maritime rescue missions.

Andrej Hunko continued:

“We now learn that this ‘monitoring mechanism’, intended as a communication channel with the Libyans, was suspended throughout the summer – namely that very critical period which saw hundreds of deaths in the Mediterranean, as the NGO ships were stuck in Italy and Malta. This proves that the Libyan ‘coastguard’ cannot be a reliable partner for maritime rescue.

Under maritime law, it is possible for a state to hand over administration of its maritime rescue zone to a neighbouring country. Missions in the Libyan SAR zone thus need to be coordinated by the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in Rome once more. This was the typical practice in recent years. Under no circumstances should the European Union equip the Libyan ‘coastguard’ with surveillance technology and IT. We therefore call for the EU project ‘Aurora’, through which the European Commission provides 46 million euros for a military maritime situation centre in Tripoli, to be put to an end.”

Download the answer to the Minor Interpellation (in German) “Anschluss der sogenannten libyschen Küstenwache an EU-Informationssysteme”: <https://www.andrej-hunko.de/start/download/dokumente/1311-an-schluss-der-sogenannten-libyschen-kuestenwache-an-eu-informationssysteme>