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# Press releas

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## **EU camps in North Africa are pointless and illegal**

"The so-called disembarkation platforms remain nothing but hot air. Not one of the intended countries in North Africa has been asked, there is not even a diplomatic concept or timetable in the relevant EU Council working groups. And the Federal Government now only wants to talk about 'disembarkation agreements'", stated Andrej Hunko, European policy spokesman for the Left Party parliamentary group in the German Bundestag in reaction to a related response from the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

The European Union is examining the establishment of "regional disembarkation centres" or "regional disembarkation platforms" in third countries. In its conclusions of 28 June 2018, the Council calls upon the Commission to examine such a concept for refugees rescued in the Mediterranean Sea, alongside the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). According to the Ministry, to date no third country has declared itself willing to enter a "disembarkation agreement".

Andrej Hunko continued:

"A plan for European camps in North Africa was already floated by former Minister of the Interior Otto Schily. Yet it remains illegal, as these would perpetuate the return of those seeking protection



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(non-refoulement). The proposal is also dangerous from a foreign policy perspective. Every government that agrees to such a detention institution within their territory would encounter huge difficulties domestically. The mere announcement of planned 'disembarkation platforms' thus led to a defensive reaction in Libya and other North African countries. Even the African Union opposes them.

I also criticise the UNHCR and the IOM, which according to the Ministry of the Interior are the only parties still involved in the implementation of 'disembarkation platforms'. These organisations need to remind themselves that they are supposed to support refugees and not fight unwanted migration.

At EU level, the Federal Government needs to push for migration policy rooted in solidarity. As long as the UNAVFOR MED military mission exists, the Federal Foreign Office needs to lobby for a new, fourth maritime rescue objective. The fact that the Federal Government pays the wages of the so-called Libyan coastguard during training measures only legitimises this brutal force and must be stopped with immediate effect."

*Andrej Hunko, Jan van Aken, Herbert Behrens, Matthias W. Birkwald, Christine Buchholz, Sevim Dagdelen, Dieter Dehm, Heidrun Dittrich, Dagmar Enkelmann, Wolfgang Gehrcke, Annette Groth, Heike Hänsel, Rosemarie Hein, Inge Höger, Harald Koch, Stefan Liebich, Ulla Lötzer, Kornelia Möller, Niema Movassat, Thomas Nord, Ingrid Remmers, Paul Schäfer, Michael Schlecht, Raju Sharma, Herbert Schui, Sabine Stüber, Alexander Süßmair, Alexander Ulrich, Halina Wawzyniak, Harald Weinberg, Katrin Werner, Jörn Wunderlich*