



MIGRATION: REGIONAL DISEMBARKATION ARRANGEMENTS

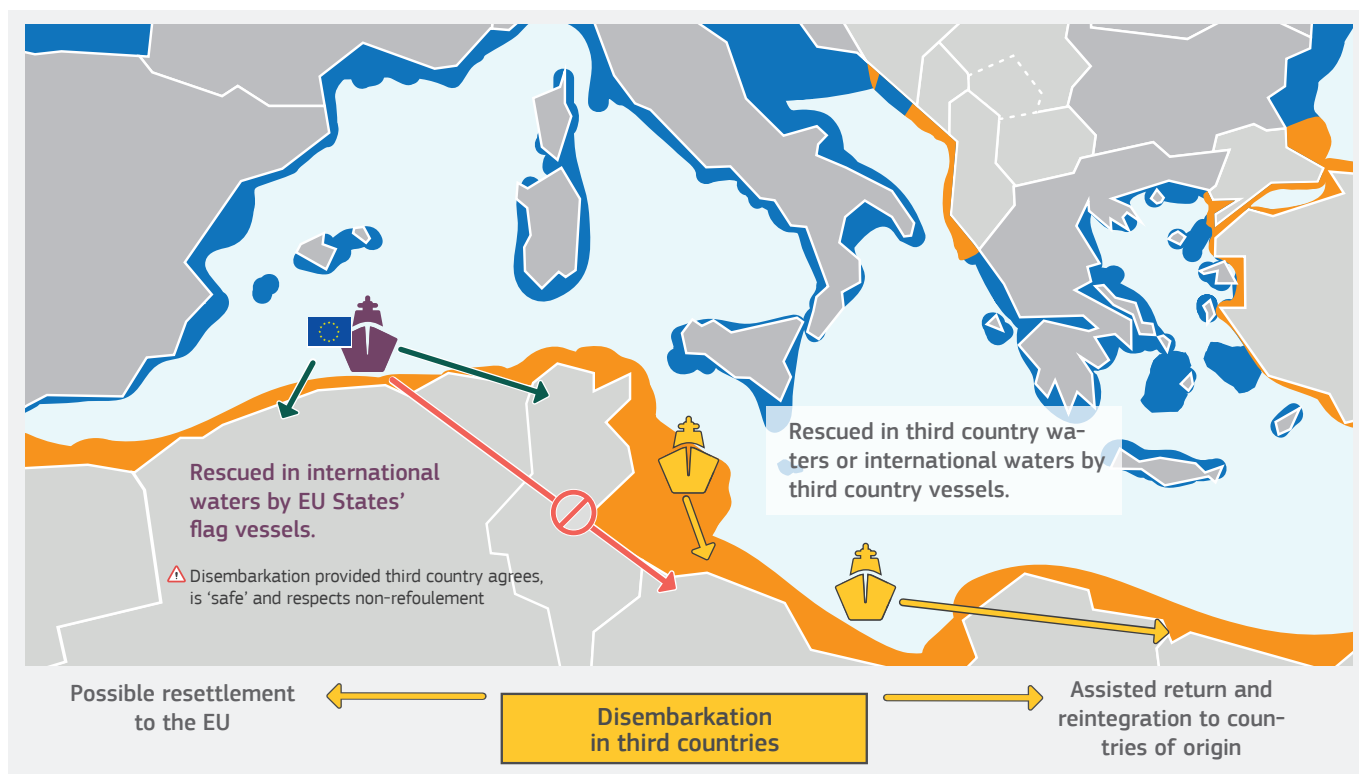
FOLLOW-UP TO THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS OF 28 JUNE 2018



The European Council in its conclusions of 28-29 June invited the Council and the Commission to swiftly explore the concept of regional disembarkation platforms, in close cooperation with relevant third countries, as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). The Commission is today presenting a first outline of the possible way forward, on the basis of the joint UNHCR and IOM proposal.

In line with the UNHCR-IOM joint proposal, the objective of regional disembarkation arrangements is to provide quick and safe disembarkation on both sides of the Mediterranean of rescued people in line with international law, including the principle of non-refoulement, and a **responsible post-disembarkation process**. Regional disembarkation platforms should be seen as working in concert with the development of controlled centres in the EU: together, both concepts should help ensure a **truly shared regional responsibility** in replying to complex migration challenges.

DISEMBARKATION IN THIRD COUNTRIES: THE LEGAL SITUATION



DISCLAIMER: This map is for illustrative purposes only and is NOT indicative of either precise territorial water delimitations or potential disembarkation points or countries.

■ territorial waters in the EU □ international waters ■ territorial waters in third countries

Disembarkation in a third country is possible if the search and rescue is carried out in the territorial sea of that country by its coast guard or by other third country vessels. If the search and rescue occurs in international waters and involves an EU State's flag vessel disembarkation can still take place in a third country, provided that the principle of non-refoulement is respected.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE REGIONAL DISEMBARKATION ARRANGEMENTS CONCEPT

- **Clear rules for all:** To reduce deaths at sea and ensure orderly and predictable disembarkation, all coastal states in the Mediterranean should be encouraged to establish search and rescue zones and Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs).
- **Developed by the UNHCR and IOM** who will help ensure those disembarked can receive protection if they are in need of it, including through resettlement schemes; or will be returned to their countries of origin if they are not, including through the assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes run by the IOM.
- **Partnerships on an equal footing:** work with interested third countries will be brought forward on the basis of existing partnerships and offered support tailor-made to their specific political, security and socio-economic situation.
- **No pull factors:** resettlement possibilities will not be available to all disembarked persons in need of international protection and points of reception should be established as far away as possible from points of irregular departure.
- **No detention, no camps:** Regional disembarkation arrangements mean providing a set of established procedures and rules to ensure safe and orderly disembarkation and post-disembarkation processing in full respect of international law and human rights.

EFFECTIVE EU SUPPORT

The EU is ready to **provide financial and operational support for disembarkation and post-disembarkation activities** as well as for border management and other forms of support, for example by:



Providing equipment and training for search and rescue activities and border management



Helping establish adequate and safe reception facilities and assistance to cover essential needs



Support for returns, including voluntary returns, and reintegration support



Support for local solutions including local integration, temporary stay and asylum applications in a third country



Increased resettlement, including a new call for pledges if needed on top of the current scheme of 50,000 places

NEXT STEPS

