



# Amman Center for Human Rights Studies statement on Human Rights Violations Committed by the Libyan Coastguards

## IN A NUTSHELL

Amnesty has documented new human rights violations by Libyan authorities against refugees and migrants. Through its cooperation with Libyan authorities, the EU is complicit in these abuses. ACHRS condemns the Libyan authorities' abuses and the EU's complicity in these abuses.

On July 15th, Amnesty International released a report, documenting new evidence for human rights violations committed by the Libyan coast guard against forcibly returned refugees and migrants. These human rights abuses include sexual violence against women, men and children. However, these human rights abuses cannot be isolated to Libya: the Libyan coastal guard is backed by the European Union in order to uphold a policy where refugees and migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea are forcibly returned to Libya and held in Libyan detention centres.

In the first six months of 2021, the Libyan coastguard intercepted 15,000 people to return them to Libya in so-called "rescue missions". However, people interviewed in the Amnesty report describe the Libyan coastguard's conduct as "negligent and abusive".

This is no news for the EU nor for the public. For over a decade, there have been consistent reporting of violence and abuses against refugees and migrants committed by the Libyan authorities. In April 2020, 13 organisations, including Oxfam, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International called for the EU to review and reform its cooperation with Libya on border control.

EU has known about the human rights violations perpetrated by the Libyan coast guard for a long time, but no change has been made to ensure the rights and safety of refugees and migrants that are crossing the Mediterranean Sea.

The European Union is complicit in the human rights violations that are taking place in Libya: European nations cannot turn a blind eye to abuses that are, although not occurring on European soil, occurring as a direct consequence of European policies.

The Amman Center for Human Rights Studies condemns the Libyan coast guard's violations of the basic human rights of migrants and refugees who have been forcibly returned. ACHRS calls upon Libyan authorities to reevaluate and reconsider the state of their migration detention facilities and investigate the human rights abuses towards refugees and migrants. Furthermore, ACHRS condemns the EU for enabling such practices and calls for the EU's immediate ending of cooperation with the Libyan coast guard on refugees and migrants. ACHRS calls for the EU's protection of migrants and refugees instead of a forced return to Libya.