



Brussels, 22nd June 2018

Jean-Claude Juncker
President of European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200

Donald Tusk,
President of European Council
Rue de la Loi 175, 1048 Bruxelles

About regional disembarkation platforms proposal

Dear Mr. Juncker, President of European Commission
Dear Mr. Tusk, President of European Council
Dear Members of the European Council,

Please use your powers to not approve during the next European Council meeting extraterritorial detention centres for refugees and migrants, called “regional disembarkation platforms” as proposed in the draft Council conclusions.

The “Australian model” is a clear violation of International human rights law and should not be implemented by the EU by any means. “The punitive approach adopted by Australia towards migrants who arrived by boat has served to erode their human rights,” said Special Rapporteur François Crépeau on behalf of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The “Australian model” to externalize the migration policy has been denounced as inhumane by UN bodies and human rights organizations. Secrecy and lack of accountability has led to gross violations of International human rights law, including arbitrary detention; cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; torture; and even a murder of a refugee at the hands of staff. Self-harm and suicide attempts are frequent and detainees including women and children have been subject to sexual and physical abuse. There is great despair in the centre as hopelessness has robbed people of the will to live.

We are extremely concerned about the proposal of “regional disembarkation platforms”. Mandatory and prolonged on- and off-shore migration detention centre are obstacles in accessing justice and basic services such as health care or education, and discrimination in all areas of life as a result of one’s immigration status or that of their family are causing immense suffering to the migrants, as well as taking a toll on their mental health.

Please use your power, to also stop immediately the EU-Turkey Statement of 2016, which has been criticized strongly by the UN, the Council of Europe and human rights organizations, it has violated fundamental human rights and is a direct assault on the right of asylum prioritizing forced returns over access to asylum. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein expressed serious concerns about the agreement regarding arbitrary detention of refugees and migrants.

All countries must respect the principles of non-refoulement, of non-discrimination and to act in the best interest of children.

Please use your powers to agree in the informal meeting on Sunday and in the Council next week to agree on a migration policy based on solidarity, safe passages and access to asylum, according to International human rights law, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Yours sincerely

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