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Answer given by Mr Brunner
on behalf of the European Commission
(16.6.2025)

Since the signature of the EU–Tunisia Strategic and Comprehensive Partnership (SCP)¹, tangible progress has been achieved across all areas of cooperation, including migration management. Human rights and democratic principles remain at the core of the EU’s external action, in line with Article 2 of the Association Agreement². These values are regularly reaffirmed through political and technical dialogue. The EU remains committed that its financial assistance is fully consistent with human rights obligations and reserves the right to invoke specific clauses in its agreements and contracts, enabling adjustments in cases of non-compliance.

The Commission considers that increased actions by Tunisia against migrant smuggling, including the prevention of departures and the interception of vessels in its waters, as well as search and rescue operations to save lives at sea, have contributed to a consistent trend of reduction of arrivals from Tunisia since the implementation of the SCP and related support.

According to information from the European Union Asylum Agency (EUAA)³, as of October 2024, no Member State had applied the safe third country concept vis-a-vis Tunisia. The Commission has no information of transfers of non-Tunisian third-country nationals to Tunisia while an application for international protection in the EU was pending.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/api/files/document/print/en/ip_23_3887/IP_23_3887_EN.pdf.

² https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/agree_international/1998/238/oj/eng.

³ See EUAA (2022): https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2022-12/2022_safe_country_concept_asylum_procedure_EN.pdf; EUAA: <https://whoiswho.euaa.europa.eu/Pages/safe-country-concept.aspx> – last updated on 4 October 2024.