

EN

E-004710/2025

Answer given by Mr Síkela
on behalf of the European Commission
(12.5.2026)

As part of the strengthened partnership between the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the EU¹, the EU has supported the rehabilitation and equipment of Mauritania's two temporary migrant reception centres (CATE) in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, via the Common Operational Partnership coordinated by Foundation for the Internationalisation of Public Administration. The rehabilitation of the Nouakchott centre was completed in October 2025, followed in January 2026 by the Nouadhibou centre.

The EU is currently supporting the functioning of both centres through two projects, whose main aim is to ensure the presence of international organisations², and to enable them to provide services to migrants and advice to Mauritanian authorities. These centres cannot be used to detain migrants arrested by the authorities³; their mandate instead is to provide dignified shelter and immediate assistance after disembarkation to migrants rescued at sea by Mauritanian authorities⁴. They also offer a structured space for individual screening to determine these migrants' legal status in Mauritania and identify those in need of international protection or special assistance⁵, who must receive specific protection in Mauritania and are exempt from forced return.

Safeguards are in place to guarantee fundamental rights. Migrants can stay in these centres for maximum 72 hours. Children are admitted into the centres only when they are accompanied by family members. The individual assessment of each disembarked migrant is carried out by Mauritanian authorities, with the support of the International Organization for Migration and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. The National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights have permanent access for monitoring. The CNDH co-manages the complaints mechanism.

¹ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/eu-mauritania-joint-declaration_en.

² The International Organization for Migration, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

³ EU Delegation to Mauritania's press release, 24 November 2025 (in French and in Spanish): https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mauritanie/communiqu%C3%A9-de-la-d%C3%A9l%C3%A9gation-de-l%E2%80%99union-europ%C3%A9enne-en-mauritanie_fr?s=109.

⁴ <https://www.interieur.gov.mr/fr/node/459>.

⁵ Including minors, pregnant women, victims of trafficking, persons with disabilities or medical conditions, and other vulnerable persons.