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Answer given by Ms Šuica
on behalf of the European Commission
(7.8.2026)

The EU is supporting Tunisia to strengthen its capacities in search and rescue. Enhancing training and operational capacities is essential to save lives at sea and ensure compliance with international standards and procedures. In this context, the EU is working with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development and the German Federal Police to develop training curricula for the Tunisian Coast Guard and support the possible establishment of a maritime training academy. The programme is funded by the EU with EUR 13.5 million and has been implemented since January 2023 for a duration of 42 months.

The EU is also cooperating with the French agency Civipol to strengthen the capacities of the Tunisian Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre. The project supports the development of coordination, communication and operational capabilities for maritime search and rescue activities. This activity is funded by the EU with approximately EUR 6.6 million, started in January 2023 and has a duration of 60 months.

Search and rescue operations are regulated by international law and aim to ensure that people in distress at sea receive assistance and are disembarked safely and quickly at the closest safe port of disembarkation, in line with international law. The Commission has no competence to coordinate search and rescue operations, nor to indicate safe places for disembarkation, the latter task being the competence of the relevant Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in charge of the coordination of each rescue operation.