

EU's Coast Guard 'wants us to violate international law' by returning migrants to war-torn Libya



The Italian NGO Mediterraneana Saving Humans' Alex migrant rescue ship carrying 46 migrants rescued off Libya coasts, docks in the port of Lampedusa

EUROPEAN authorities continued to neglect NGO migrant rescue ships adrift in the Mediterranean this weekend.

The Alan Kurdi, a vessel operated by German charity Sea-Eye and named after a Syrian Kurdish boy who drowned off the coast of Turkey in 2015, rescued 65 people 34 miles from the Libyan coast last Friday morning.

"The EU-funded Coast Guard requests us to violate international law," Sea-Eye wrote on Twitter some hours after the rescue. "We will not return the rescued to Libyan torture camps.

"With 65 rescued persons on board, we are now on our way to Lampedusa. We

are not intimidated by Interior Minister [Matteo Salvini] but instead head towards the nearest port of safety.”

Meanwhile, Italy was refusing to allow another NGO rescue ship to dock in Lampedusa.

The Italian charity Mediterranea Saving Humans’s sailboat, the Alex, picked up 54 shipwrecked migrants off the southern coast of Lampedusa last Thursday.

It finally made land early on Sunday morning after a tense stand-off with Italian authorities, who confiscated the ship shortly after.

The Alan Kurdi announced on Saturday evening that it had changed course and was headed to Malta after the island nation said it would help resettle the migrants across Europe.

But the ship was not immediately allowed to come into port.

Sea-Eye tweeted on Sunday: “While the Alan Kurdi has to wait outside Malta’s closed harbor, three people are under acute medical care. All three collapsed in the heat.

“We urgently need medical assistance and a safe port for all rescued on board to prevent worse.”

Maltese authorities later confirmed that they would transfer the 65 rescued immigrants on board to other EU member states, while the three people requiring medical assistance would be “immediately evacuated” from the ship.

Source:

<https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/refugee-rescue-group-says-eus-coast-guard-wants-us-violate-international-law-returning>

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