



04/06: 3 boats with ~105 people heading to Lesbos, 2 boats rescued by Turkish coast guard to Turkey after reportedly been pushed back by Greek coast guard, 1 boat rescued to Mytilene

In Distress
Push-Back
Boza

VERIFIED

05.06.2020 / 15:10 / Aegean Sea

Watch The Med Alarm Phone Investigations – 3rd of June 2020

Case name: 2020_06_04-AEG674

Situation: three boats: all were attacked, only one boat was finally rescued to Greece, the other two were rescued by Turkish coast guard

Status of WTM Investigation: concluded

Place of Incident: Aegean Sea

Summary of the Case:

On 4th of June 2020 the Alarm Phone was informed about three boats in distress in Greek waters. In all cases the responsible authorities refused to provide prompt assistance. Furthermore they attacked and hindered the travellers on their way to Lesbos, Greece and endangered so the lives of the travellers for many hours. Only one of the boats the Alarm Phone was alerted to, was finally rescued to Greece.

Case 1

On 4th of June 2020 our shift team was called by a relative who provided telephone numbers of travellers on a boat with 35 persons, among them 10 children and 5 women, some of them pregnant. The travellers were from African countries. 10 minutes later the shift team reached the travellers who were desperate and panicking. In the next 20 minutes they provided the shift team with GPS positions, the first one in Greek, the later one in Turkish waters. They moreover stated that the Greek coast guard took their engine and in later phone calls they said the Turkish coast guard were now there. In a phone call at 8:02h CEST to the Greek coast guards the Alarm Phone transmitted all information also about the second boat (Case 2). Unfortunately the Alarm Phone lost contact to the travellers after 8:00h. Calling the Greek coast guard at 10:36h didn't bring clarity to the fate of the travellers. At 11:24h the shift team received a message from the travellers stating that the Turkish police arrested them and taking them to a police station. The shift team called the Greek coast guard at 12:58h again. They said the case was in Turkish waters and we should call therefor them. One hour later the called Turkish coast guard informed the shift team that the travellers are back in Turkey and so did 17:30h also the relative.

Twitter chronology:

18:04h https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1268574357946863618

Case 2

On 4th of June at 07:53h CEST the Alarm Phone received the information about a boat in distress near Lesbos. Also those travellers were robbed of their engine and left adrift. Greek coast guards were called at 8:02h and 9:00h with updated GPS positions. In a phone call at 9:49h the Greek coast guard said to have sent patrol boats to the travellers. The Turkish coast guard were also called at 9:35h. They stated standing nearby but not intervening as the boat was located in Greek waters and the Greek authorities were on the spot. At 11:00h the travellers sent new GPS position to the Alarm Phone and also stated that the Greek coast guard had brought the boat back to the borderline to Turkey but as the Turkish coast guard is standing by they couldn't push the travellers further. When the Greek coastguard in Piraeus were called at 12:00h they only took the new GPS and then hung up. Few minutes later the called Turkish coast guard informed the shift team that they are observing the situation. The shift team sent an email to UNHCR Greece and Turkey at 12:20h to demand that any steps should be taken to save the lives of the travellers who are at sea for more than 15 hours and meanwhile dehydrated. At 12:50h the Alarm Phone received a video of a boat driven by masked men attacking the boat with travellers and leaving. The video were shared on social media shortly after. The Alarm Phone confronted the Greek coast guard in a phone call at 12:58h with the incident and they said it's the first time they

Related Reports

23:28 Apr 01, 2021 / Aegean Sea Kms

31/03: Travellers stranded on Lesbos fear push-back, but were finally brought to quarantine camp Megala Therna

17:57 Jun 14, 2020 / Aegean Sea Kms

13/06: 32 people, 11 women and 11 children denied rescue for several hours North of Lesbos, but finally rescued to Greece

00:33 Jan 01, 2020 / Aegean Sea Kms

31/12: 42 people stranded on Lesbos, rescued by Refugee Rescue

12:17 Dec 26, 2020 / Aegean Sea Kms

25/12: Three young men stranded on Lesbos

19:30 Jun 19, 2015 / Aegean Sea, near Mithymna Kms

18 people in distress near Lesbos Island, all rescued



hear about that and that they will look into it. At 13:11h a new GPS position is shared with Alarm Phone by the travellers and at 13:36h the Greek coast guard is called to update them about the location. They stated to not have found any boat at the given GPS position from 11:00h. Instead the coast guard transferred a position in Turkish waters and stated that the boat would have been found there. The Alarm Phone should call only if boats are in Greek waters. Short afterwards the Turkish coast guard were called. They explained that a lot of migrant boats are in the area and that they are operating with several patrol boats at the moment. Still three hours later the Turkish coast guard were lacking information about possible rescues. When the shift team called the Greek coast guard at 16:40h they informed that the Turkish coast guard have saved two boats, which we assume were case 1 and case 2. Also a friend of the travellers informed the Alarm Phone at 17:38h that this boat has been rescued by Turkish coast guard.

Tweet chronology:

08.19h https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1268427253593104384
08:52h https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1268435500408373259
10:28h https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1268459622802874370
11:22h https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1268473160783015941
12:50h https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1268495290430115840
13.22h https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1268503320441827329
16.58h https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1268557741808902151
17.24h https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1268564401575133188

Case 3

On 4th of June at 13:46h CEST videos of a third boat reached the Alarm Phone. The situation was the following : Some people were in the water trying to change direction of boat by swimming. Greek coast guards was using patrol boats to push them back out of Greek waters by making large waves. The travellers stated to have been in water for more than a day. The number of persons was 32 with many young children. When the shift team called the Turkish coast guard at 16:04h they informed us that "a German Frontex vessel" had saved the travellers. Later on, the Alarm Phone got confirmation that the travellers had been brought to Mytilene - and even later understood that it was indeed a German vessel that was involved in the rescue. It was the "A1411 Berlin" under Nato-command (and not part of the Frontex mission as was misunderstood before).

In all three cases we are still investigating the detailed developments and will include potential updates into this report later on.

Twitter chronology:

18:24h https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1268579446199660545

Last update: 18:51 Jul 09, 2021