



26/07: 2 cases: 24 and 60 travelers in distress near Lesbos, both intercepted to Turkey

📍 In Distress ✂ Interception 🚫 Push-Back

VERIFIED

27.07.2020 / 18:01 / Aegean Sea

Watch The Med Alarm Phone Investigations – 26th of July 2020

Case name: 2020_07_26-AEG690

Status of WTM Investigation: Concluded

Place of Incident: Aegean Sea

Summary of the cases:

On the 26th of July, the Alarm Phone was contacted in two cases of attack and distress at sea. The first alert reached us from the east of Lesbos. Reportedly, they had also been attacked and their fuel was stolen. On the boat there were 10 children, 20 women and one of them was pregnant and sick. Despite this, they were brought to Turkey.

In the second case the travelers were urgently asking for help since their boat was drifting, with no motor. Reportedly, they had been attacked and their motor and water was stolen. We informed the authorities but they were eventually brought to Turkey.

We are still investigating the detailed developments and will include potential updates into this report

Case 1: Boat with 24 ppl attacked near Lesbos (South-East)

On the 26th of July the Alarm Phone received a message from a boat in distress carrying 24 travelers, among them women and children. The authorities were informed about the boat at 22:03h CEST. According to the travelers they were attacked by a vessel they assumed to belong to the Greek Coast Guards (GCG). The attackers stole the motor of the boat, their water and refused to help them, even though there were children on the boat. The GCG reported to us in a phone-call that there were 2 Turkish patrols near the boat however, according to the GCG they refused to rescue them. Once we managed to get back in touch with the boat, the travelers told us that water was entering their boat and confirmed the presence of the 2 Turkish patrols that refused to act. Shortly before midnight we received a confirmation from the travelers and the TCG that they have been rescued to Turkey. Nevertheless, they were left adrift for hours by both the Greek & Turkish Coast Guards before they were rescued. Non-assistance and refusal of rescue are a crime. We are still investigating the detailed developments and will include potential updates into this report.

Case 2: Boat with 60 ppl (including 10 children and 1 pregnant woman) attacked near Lesbos (East)

On the 26th of July the Alarm Phone received a call from a boat in distress East of Lesbos. There were 60 travelers on the boat, among them 10 children, 20 women, 1 of them was pregnant and getting sick. The authorities were informed at 05:59h CEST. The travelers claimed that they have been attacked in the morning, by a vessel they assumed to belong to the Greek Coast Guards (GCG) and that their boat was adrift. The travelers claimed to see the GCG in the distance, people were swimming and pulling the boat, since their fuel was stolen and they tried to reach a safe place and asylum. At 6:45h we received a new position that was on the borderline between Greece and Turkey. Only at 8:00h we received confirmation from relatives of the travellers that the Turkish Coast Guards (TCG) have rescued them. Later on we also received a message from the travelers that they were taken to Turkey. We are still investigating the detailed developments and will include potential updates into this report.

Last update: 19:22 Dec 05, 2020

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