



Taller Map Smaller Map

## 24/08: 44 travelers attacked by Greek coastguard, pushed back to Turkey



In Distress Push-Back

VERIFIED

25.08.2020 / 15:03 / Aegean Sea

### Watch The Med Alarm Phone Investigations – 24th of August 2020

Case name: 2020\_08\_24-AEG702

Situation: 44 travelers attacked, beaten, rubbed, and pushed back to Turkish waters by Greek coastguard. Returned to Turkey.

Status of WTM Investigation: Concluded

Place of Incident: Aegean Sea

#### Summary of the Case:

On 24th of August 2020 at 03:53h CEST, the Alarm Phone received a message via Facebook saying:

*"We are at sea in a rubber boat, now we are being taken back to Turkey, and there are high waves. We are now in the territorial waters near the island of Mytilene. We are in danger. We have children and here masked men are trying to send us back to Turkey. We are near the port of Skala. The boat is starting to fill up, and the waves are high. We are in danger of sinking. The boat is starting to fill up, and the waves are high. We are in danger of sinking"*

At 04:00h, our shift team tried to call the travelers in distress, without success. At

04:06h, they sent another message on Facebook:

*"They try to take my phone from my hand. They don't want me to tell anyone about our ordeal They beat us and they beat children and women. They took the engine of the boat and gasoline and took some people's possessions and threw them into the sea"*

At 04:17h, we received a GPS location from the travelers and at 04:18h, we could talk to them on the phone. There were 44 people on the boat, among them a pregnant woman and 14 children. They reported that at that moment, they were being pushed back to Turkish waters by the Greek coastguard. They had towed their boat to the coastguard's vessel and pulled them behind it. The person we talked to said it was not safe to talk on the phone: *"They took our phones and hit us with an iron stick, they were masked. I hide under the stirrups. Too much blood. Everybody scary."*

At 05:23h, we called the Greek coastguard and told them that we knew about the case. They said they would send a boat there. From then on, we could not get through to the travelers anymore. At 06:36h, we called the Greek coastguard for an update. They stated to have sent a vessel and not have found the boat. At 11:26h, we reached the person who had been on the boat. They reported to be back in Turkey, and everyone was finally safe.

Alarm Phone is still investigating the details of this case and will include potential updates into this report.

#### Twitter Chronology:

06:14h CEST - [https://twitter.com/alarm\\_phone/status/1297749004269293569](https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1297749004269293569)

10:19h CEST - [https://twitter.com/alarm\\_phone/status/1297810686370885633](https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1297810686370885633)

22:21h CEST - [https://twitter.com/alarm\\_phone/status/1297992487571775488](https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1297992487571775488)

22:23h CEST - [https://twitter.com/alarm\\_phone/status/1297992907014758402](https://twitter.com/alarm_phone/status/1297992907014758402)

Last update: 19:04 Dec 20, 2020

### Related Reports

16:10 Apr 01, 2018 / Aegean Sea Kms

[31/03: 40 travellers rescued by the Greek coast guard to Lesbos](#)

19:04 Aug 13, 2020 / Aegean Sea Kms

[12/08: 45 travellers rescued to Lesbos](#)

00:36 Nov 17, 2017 / Aegean Sea Kms

[16/11: Alarm Phone alerted to boat in distress near Lesbos with 40 persons on board, including 15 children, all rescued](#)

11:20 Dec 14, 2012 / Thermi - Lesbos Isl. - Greece Kms

[Thermi Wreck - 21 people found dead, at least 6 missing](#)

13:55 Dec 07, 2013 / Mytilene Kms

[6 people survived, 3 missing.](#)

