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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ENLARGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

DGA2. Southern Neighbourhood, Turkey, Migration/Refugees and Security issues
DGA2.01 Migration

Brussels,
NEAR.DGA.01/█/Ares(2023)

NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF █
█ NEAR DGA2.01

Subject: Mission report of █ to Tunis, 27/29 November 2023

Purpose of the Mission

The purpose of the mission was to:

- Participate in the Steering Committee Meetings for the Border Management Project (BMP Maghreb) █
- █

Main findings:

The Garde Nationale's current efforts are **centred in the Sfax area**, having strategically relocated the majority of their personnel from the north and centre of the country. As of November 24, the Coast Guard has **executed 3022 operations, resulting in 73,185 interceptions**—significantly surpassing the 31,859 interceptions recorded in 2022. A rough assessment by the GNM suggests that at least 20% of these intercepted migrants are counted more than once due to multiple attempts to cross. In 2023, 753 smugglers have been detained, slightly down from the 784 detained throughout 2022.

These new

boats aim to reduce operational costs and modernize an aging fleet. The GNM has committed to swift collaboration with UNOPS to approve the Terms of Reference (ToR) for procurement.



Additionally, **seven 17m boats will be refurbished through our Search and Rescue (SAR) programme.** The ToR for these initiatives is ready and awaiting approval from the GNM, which has committed to approving them before year-end.



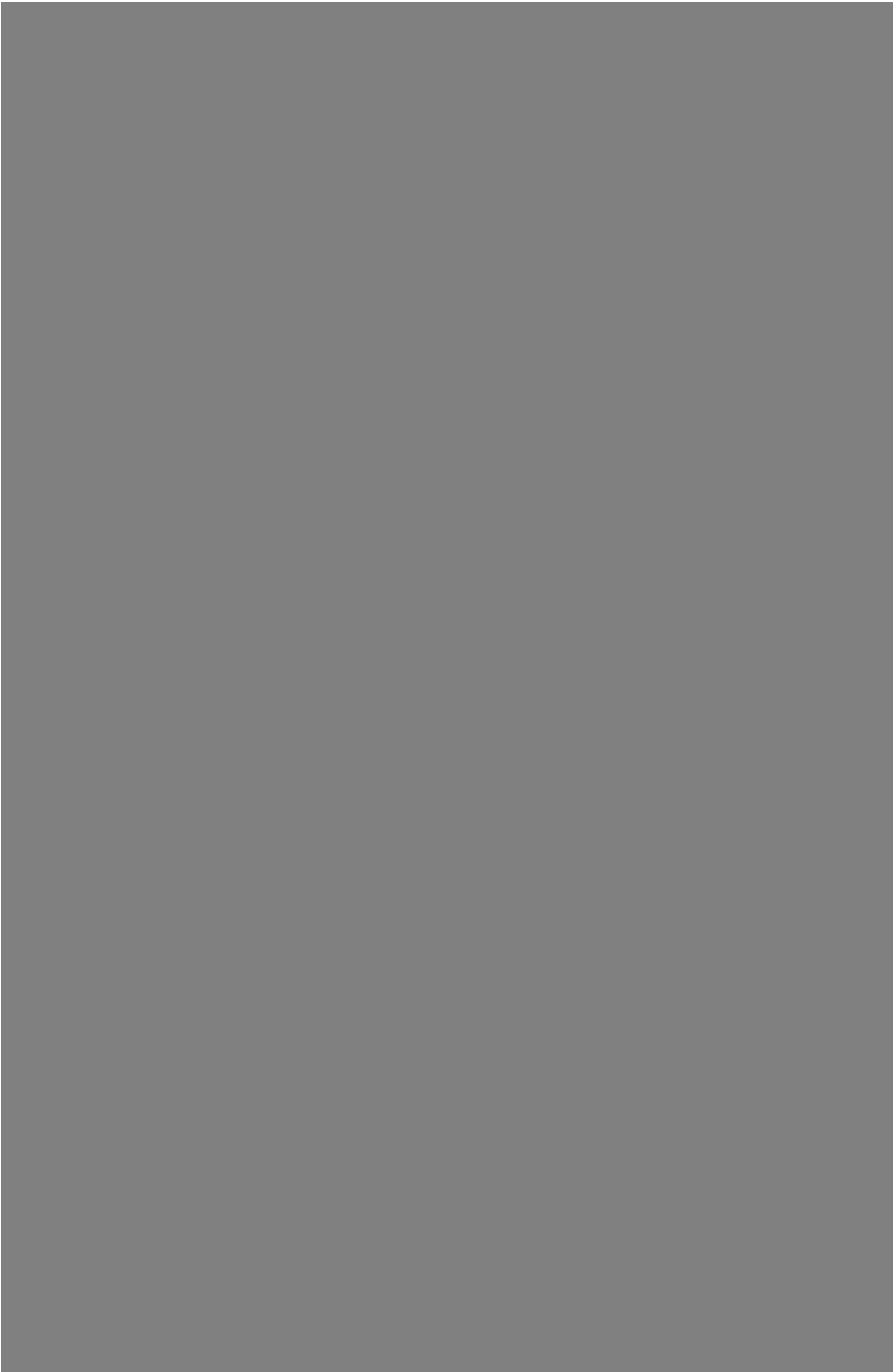
Prioritizing 11m boats, seven have been requested through the BMP, with plans to procure them based on the ToR prepared by UNOPS for the Italian supply.



Meetings







3 - Steering Committee and meetings on the Border Management Programme Maghreb, Tunisia component.

[REDACTED]

The **National Guard's threefold priorities** within the BMP-Maghreb project were outlined. Firstly, the **acquisition of coastal surveillance radar systems** took precedence, crucial for enhancing border security. Secondly, the establishment of a dedicated **electronic maintenance unit** was proposed to ensure the longevity of fleet and electronic equipment. Thirdly, the creation of a **central command room** aimed at strategically coordinating all border security activities was emphasized.

To address financial needs, a substantial request of around 15 million euros was submitted to the European Union. This additional funding sought to implement an LTE system along the entire coast in the coming year, a move strategically aimed at bolstering communication and connectivity capacities.

DG NEAR articulated the collective objective of the steering committee – addressing irregular migration, maritime operations, and EU commitment to supporting the National Guard in ensuring regional security. A substantial financial commitment of 65 million euros for border management in Tunisia in 2023 underscored the EU's dedication. An additional 18 million euros were earmarked specifically for combating human traffickers.

[REDACTED] The National Guard provided a comprehensive overview of the BMP-Maghreb project's history, underscoring impactful actions such as radar standardisation and extensive personnel training, enhancing the capabilities of the Tunisian Coast Guard.

Decisions regarding the acquisition of boats and the importance of drones for field support and coastal surveillance were key points. GNM stressed the priority to procure **11m boats**, [REDACTED]. Electronic maintenance of 9m rubber boats needed. Future acquisitions of **27m vessels** have been prioritised.

In terms of decisions, DG NEAR urged the presentation of **budgeted scenarios** to facilitate informed decisions regarding the coastal surveillance system. The National Guard emphasized the need for progress despite budget constraints, and decisions surrounding LTE awaited EU approval. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[e-signed]

[REDACTED]

c.c.:



Annex I: Agenda for the BMP steering Committee

Annex II: Agenda Training Academy Steering Committee