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## **Migration: EU presidency, a partnership with Tunisia against illegal immigration**

“Fighting illegal immigration from or to Tunisia, avoiding the loss of human lives at sea, are priorities shared by Tunisia and the European Union”. This was said by the Spanish Secretary of State, Pascual Navarro Rios, current president of the EU, at the plenary session of the EU Parliament in Strasbourg, about the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the EU and Tunisia. “The Memorandum helps take a global approach to immigration. We agree with our Tunisian counterparts that immigration must be addressed by connecting immigration with development. The Memorandum includes: the fight against migrant smuggling, border management by creating a Tunisian coastguard, equipment; reducing losses of lives at sea, promoting humanitarian corridors through seasonal employment; supporting the voluntary return of illegal migrants and assistance in the reintegration of irregular Tunisians through local employment projects”. The EU-Tunisia Partnership Council will meet in the next few months. “It is essential to prevent the irregular departures that too often end up in tragedies. We will strengthen the border protection capacities of Tunisia, including strengthening its coastal surveillance system, with full respect to human rights. We need to redouble our efforts to crack down on criminal networks of smugglers and traffickers who are exploiting human despair”, the EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Oliver Varhelyi, said.

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