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Press release | 03.07.2018

Open Arms – 'Saving Life is not a Crime' – MEP Ana Miranda

Press release from EFA MEP Ana Miranda (Galicia)

Greens/EFA MEP **Ana Miranda**, who is on board the ship Astral operated by NGO Open Arms, has called for action at EU level to prevent the criminalisation of NGOs engaged in search and rescue work in the Mediterranean.

The ship which assisted in the rescue of 59 people from the Mediterranean sea over the weekend, was denied permission to land in either Italy or Malta, but has been granted permission to dock in Barcelona.

Speaking from on board the Astral, Ana Miranda MEP said:

"European states have to assume their responsibilities and cannot let people die in the Mediterranean and look the other way.

"The work done by NGOs such as open arms is vital in saving lives.

"Their work is necessary and unavoidable until the conflicts that people are fleeing are resolved. Europe has a duty and an obligation to assist those fleeing conflict and seeking refuge.

"NGOs such as Open Arms are simply saving lives, and saving life is not a crime".

The European Parliament has in April supported a resolution which opposed the criminalisation of humanitarian aid, and recognised the important work done by NGOs in this field.

The Galician MEP added:

"The European Union does not have the courage or the political ambition to save lives, but it shows that the European system is based on protecting the borders and dissuading immigrants and refugees instead of going to the causes of why they come to Europe, fleeing their countries."

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Ana Miranda

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