



NGO statement on the closure of PIKPA solidarity camp

Athens, 11 July 2018 - We, the undersigned organizations active in human rights and humanitarian aid, urge the Regional Governor of the North Aegean Region to re-examine her decision to suspend the operations of Lesvos Solidarity in the area of PIPKA on the island of Lesvos.

PIKPA, an open, self-organised solidarity space, has provided essential services and assistance to refugees on Lesvos since 2012. In 2016, the UNHCR awarded the Nansen Refugee Award to one of the co-founders of PIKPA, in recognition of their work saving lives and providing a safe haven for the most vulnerable during the refugee 'crisis' in 2015. We urge the Greek Government to continue supporting the outstanding contributions of PIPKA and the Greek citizens who have displayed thousands of acts of solidarity, humanity and compassion towards refugees. These voluntary acts by ordinary Greek people are a source of national pride and international recognition.

PIKPA have willingly complied with all official recommendations in order to build upon the exceptional services they have been providing to vulnerable asylum seekers. It appears that menial concerns are being used to justify moving vulnerable people back to Moria, a dangerously overcrowded facility where residents' health and safety is in jeopardy. In the early hours of Tuesday 10 July, violent riots forced hundreds of people, including many families, to flee Moria with nowhere to go. These outbreaks of violence are a recurring situation in Moria.

If PIPKA is closed, it is currently unclear where the existing residents would be transferred. However, returning to Moria would endanger the physical and mental health of the residents and should be avoided at all costs. The authorities should cease transfers of new arrivals to Moria and expedite transfers out of the facility to safe accommodation elsewhere. Immediate improvements to the conditions in Moria must be prioritized to ensure access to safe accommodation and basic services for those forced to reside there.

Taking into account all of the above, the number of reports drawn up by international organizations, including the recent observations from the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as the experience of many of us through our programs on Lesvos since 2015, we call on the Regional Governor to reconsider her decision to close PIPKA.



- Camp Fire Innovation
- Caritas Hellas
- Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (CEAR)
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- Greek Council for Refugees
- HIAS
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS)
- Oxfam
- SolidarityNow
- Terre des hommes Hellas

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