



*“All humans will be brothers across all borders”  
Ode to Joy (informal hymn of the EU)*

The accident is Moria, not the fire.

The prevalence of inhumane conditions, the violations of dignity and of people’s human rights taking place in Moria is not a secret. It has been thoroughly and officially documented, yet the response to these reports and pleas did not institute any sensible change.

It is precisely this lack of response, the tolerance of these conditions which suggest that this situation was part of a concrete policy and not an accident; it was another deterrence measure to eliminate any “pull factors” that might attract more desperate people to the shores of Europe. Moria has been also burned several times in the past. People have died in there. The recent fire was a premeditated disaster.

The announcement for quarantine following the first reported cases of COVID -19 in Moria, equaled to keeping thousands of people cramped into a space without appropriate and adequate means to protect themselves and others.

After the fire that burnt down Moria camp completely, over 12,000 people are once again seeking for safety and protection. European unwillingness to actually manage the refugee crisis effectively, its denial to share responsibility and the fact that no working partnership is in place between European countries, do not facilitate a long-lasting, substantial solution. Instead, short sited, populist measures, mere patchworks made out of wrong intentions, limited knowledge and unlimited arrogance have prevailed. Not even drowned children washed ashore have not been able to alter this approach. Greece and Europe are experiencing a crisis of reception and solidarity. It is their reactions that have turned a manageable situation into a humanitarian crisis.

The smoke of the Moria fires cannot in any way cover the fact of the cramped and degrading conditions prevailing in there and in the rest of the Aegean islands, where close to 36,000 asylum seekers are congregated in camps, suitable for no more than 6,000 people.

We choose to remain hopeful and optimistic provided that not just sense but also sensibility will prevail over politics and numbers. We expect and ask for actions based on the respect of human rights and dignity to be immediately taken thus upholding the backbone of the European values.

The current response whether from the Greek government and/or European countries and UN institutions, suggest that where there is a will there is a way. In this respect:

we call on the Greek government to:

- Immediately transfer all vulnerable people from all the overcrowded islands in the mainland and provide them with decent and humane reception and living conditions as set forth in the “reception” directive and the International humanitarian law
- Institute all necessary and appropriate measures to protect the health of all, especially of those who are usually “left behind” thus preventing the occurrence of disease and the spread of the virus
- Utilize the potential for the provision of Psychosocial Services
- Refrain from any actions which jeopardize the right to asylum in accordance with EC relevant directives.
- Drop its announced policy for closed centers



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- Divert from fragmented and ad hoc measures by instituting and implementing a coherent integration strategy starting upon one's entry into the country
- Respond to allegations of pushbacks with actual facts/results of an independent authority's investigation
- Ask for the immediate enactment of a new relocation scheme

We call on the European union to:

- Show solidarity not just expressed in monetary values but on actions which will allow for the immediate relocation of people from Greece
- Improve the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and guarantee safe passage for all refugees and migrants
- Reconsider the current situation and take drastic measures particularly in view of the new asylum pact for promoting policies based on the respect of human rights and dignity
- Institute mechanisms for investigating and responding to "official" allegations of pushbacks and/or other possible violations of European law

Human dignity should not be buried under the ashes of Moria.