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LESVOS

Successful relocation of 27-year-old M.M. to Germany after 7 months of efforts

Lesvos, September 9, 2021 - M.M, a 27-year-old Afghan beneficiary of subsidiary protection, who attempted to self-immolate in the Mavrovouni Reception and Identification Centre (RIC) of Lesvos on February 21, 2021, has been safely relocated to Germany with her family. The transfer to Germany was made possible by a new order of the Investigating Judge of the First Instance Court of Mytilene, which allowed for her exit from the country, under the condition that M.M. reports at a Greek consular authority in Germany once a month, until a final ruling on the criminal charges pending against her is made.

In February, M.M. – then pregnant - [attempted to take her life inside Mavrovouni temporary Reception and Identification Centre \(RIC\), in Lesvos](#). As a result of the attempted self-immolation, M.M. sustained injuries on several parts of her body, including her head, both hands, back, and legs, and inhaled smoke that caused her to lose consciousness for a short period of time. M.M. was rescued by the residents of the neighboring tents and was transferred to the hospital immediately after.

M.M. and her family had lived for more than a year in the inhuman conditions of Moria and Mavrovouni RICs before she attempted to take her life. For this act of desperation, she was later charged with “arson with intent, endangering life and the objects of others”, as well as with “damage of an object of common utility by means of fire.” The case is still pending at the pre-trial-stage.

HIAS Greece and Legal Centre Lesvos express their satisfaction with the positive outcome regarding the family’s relocation. The decisions taken by the Judicial Authorities as well as those of the Central Asylum Service were instrumental in making the family’s transfer possible. At the same time, we hope that the Judicial Authorities will recognize M.M.’s act of desperation as self-harm, which is not punishable according to Greek penal code.

This criminal case constitutes another example of misguided use of criminal law mechanism against refugees, and simultaneously reveals the failure of the state to provide adequate living conditions for persons seeking international protection in Greece.

