

Protect dignity and human rights: call for solidarity gathering in support of PIKPA on Wednesday, 14 October 2020.

The Greek government is about to close a historic shelter for vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees, with no care for the future of its residents. The Secretary General of Social Solidarity and Poverty Alleviation of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs asked the Police to evacuate the PIKPA Shelter in Neapoli Mytilene until 15-10-2020.

PIKPA shelter is a well-known facility operating since 2012. At the time, it was the only open reception facility on the island, in stark contrast to Moria camp, which operated as a Detention Centre. For years, many actors have come together at the PIKPA shelter to support some of the most vulnerable people in the island, including Lesvos Solidarity, founded in 2016. As also highlighted in UNHCR's recent announcement in support of PIKPA,¹ Efi Latsoudi, one of the founders, was awarded the UNHCR Nansen Award in Geneva, in 2016.

PIKPA currently hosts 94 highly vulnerable persons (unaccompanied minors, victims of torture, severely handicapped persons, persons with serious illnesses) who have been referred there for accommodation by the competent state authorities (Public Prosecutor for the unaccompanied minors and Reception and Identification Service in collaboration with UNHCR for the rest of the cases).

Characterising PIKPA an "illegally squatted" facility, as was done by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in the letter calling for the facility's evacuation,² lacks any grounding.

One month after the fire in Moria, which once more accentuated the squalid conditions under which asylum seekers are hosted on the Greek islands, the first rain proved the inadequacy of the temporary facility in which Moria's displaced asylum seekers and refugees were transferred to. Particularly amid these circumstances and the COVID-19 pandemic, the evacuation of one of the most humane facilities in Greece and particularly the Greek islands seems to lack reasoning and humaneness and is directly at odds with Greece and the EU's obligation to respect human rights and provide proper reception conditions to asylum seekers, particularly the most vulnerable.

In solidarity with refugees and the organizations that strive to assist them even under the most deplorable conditions, especially on the Greek islands, we call on the Greek authorities to reconsider the order to evacuate PIKPA.

On Wednesday, 14-10-2020, we will stand by Pikpa in defense of the humanity and dignity that everyone deserves. We call on everyone supporting humanity and

¹ <https://www.unhcr.org/gr/16647-month-moria-fires-unhcr-warns-worsening-conditions-ahead-winter.html>

² <https://stonisi.gr/post/11720/ekkenwste-to-pikpa-ews-tis-15-oktwvrioy>

dignity to **join us in solidarity at PIKPA camp on Wednesday 14 October at 10:00am.***

*We respect hygiene measures and those most vulnerable amongst us. We wear a mask and keep social distancing measures.

Signatories

ANTIGONE - Information and Documentation Centre on Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non-Violence
Changemakers Lab
CRWI Diotima
Ecological Movement of Thessaloniki
Equal Rights Beyond Borders
Europe Must Act
Fenix - Humanitarian Legal Aid
Greek Council for Refugees (GCR)
Greek Forum of Migrants
Greek Housing Network
Hellenic Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN Greece)
Hellenic League for Human Rights (HIHR)
Help Refugees/Choose Love
HIAS Ελλάδας
HumanRights360
INTERSOS Hellas
InterVolve
Legal Centre Lesbos
Lesvos Solidarity
Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)
METAdrasi
Mobile Info Team
Network for Children's Rights
Odyssea
PRAKSIS
Refugee Rights Europe
Refugee Support Aegean (RSA)
SolidarityNow
Symbiosis-School of Political Studies in Greece
Terre des hommes Hellas