

From: [REDACTED]
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To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report of visit to Lesvos on 15/9
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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 9:54 AM
To: PARIAT Monique (HOME) <Monique.Pariat@ec.europa.eu>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cc: GMINDER Beate (HOME) <Beate.Gminder@ec.europa.eu>
Subject: Report of visit to Lesvos on 15/9

Dear colleagues,

We concluded yesterday, Beate and myself, a four hours visit to the new camp created by the Greek government after the fires that destroyed the RIC of Moria and the adjacent Olive Grove recently.

The visit started with a tour led by the Minister of Asylum and Immigration to the new camp which is under construction in an area near the already existing camp of Kara Tepe.

Extensive excavations and levelling works were observed in order to make it suitable for the installation of tents. The construction works and the installation of the tents are done by units of the Greek Army. More than 700 tents and 7 rubhalls have been installed so far. The actions are coordinated by Ministers Mitarakis and Chrysochoidis, the General Secretary Logothetis, the president of EODY [REDACTED] and the general of the Greek Army [REDACTED].

However, despite the significant effort made, there are significant shortcomings which, among other things, prevent or discourage the population outside the camp, especially mothers with children, from settling. The current shortages of toilets, showers and running water, a general feeling of insecurity, the fear of new fires as well as the exposure of the area to floods during the winter may be additional factors for postponing a decision for installation.

Consequently, a new permanent camp must be top priority since the current one is not winter proof.

After our tour the President of the European Council Charles Michel arrived to the island of Lesbos. He observed the burned RIC of Moria from an helicopter made available by the Greek Army and concluded his visit by the following statements:

- *I feel personally touched by this dramatic situation. It was important for me to come here and to express our European solidarity.*
- *First of all, I would like to express our solidarity for the migrants, for the people of Lesbos, and for all the aid workers. And we want to support the efforts made by the Greek authorities.*
- *This is a difficult and a very complex situation. But on behalf of the European Union, I would want to say that I refuse to paper over this migration challenge.*
- *This is a common European challenge. By the end of the month, the European Commission intends to put new concrete proposals on the table. And we need to be more committed in order to be more efficient. I am convinced that, of course, we need to make more progress in order to improve our border controls.*
- *We also need to have more partnerships with third countries. We need to make progress to have more convergence in the framework of our asylum policy. We will have difficult debates, but we need to be more efficient.*
- *I am here because I refuse to let the European Union lower its eyes to the challenges of migration.*
- *It is a common challenge. All European states must be mobilized. We must support countries like Greece which are on the front line. We have to take responsibility. This debate is politically difficult in Europe, as we know, but it is the dignity of the European project to be brought together in order to be able to progress and meet this challenge.*
- *I think that we must continue to work to improve the control of our borders. The borders of Greece are the borders of the European Union. We must continue to make progress in*

order to be engaged externally and to develop partnerships with countries outside the European Union. We must also continue to make progress in order to advance more convergences, including our migration policies.

- *Finally, we must define the modalities of effective solidarity so that we are all mobilized to make our approach to this difficult issue of migration more effective, and this, in accordance with the values that founded this unique European project in the history and which brings together 450 million European citizens with all the leaders who lead the Member States.*

In a short bilateral conversation between Beate and the President of the European Council he inquired about details of relocation exercise and EU support.

Photos taken during the visit are attached.

Kind regards,


[Redacted]

[Redacted]



Migration Management Support
DG Migration and Home Affairs
European Commission

[Redacted]

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