

Athens, 5 March 2020

Statement

The influx and the subsequent effort for relief of refugees and migrants have been very demanding on Greek society since several years and have created an emergency situation, which has not always been recognized adequately as such by the international community. 'The Smile of the Child', the largest civil society Organization in Greece in the field of child protection, expresses again its deep concern over the recent developments in the refugee and migration crisis in the Aegean area, and especially over their consequences for children caught up in extremely precarious circumstances.

Refugee and migrant children should not be in detention, should not be used by States and governments for leverage to attain their geopolitical objectives and should have their fundamental rights to safety, physical and mental integrity and education fully safeguarded, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the values of all human societies.

'The Smile of the Child' therefore salutes and supports the initiative of its German partner CJD to relocate as many of the unaccompanied minors as possible to its shelter facilities in Germany, in a spirit of solidarity and human compassion.

Above all, 'The Smile of the Child' hopes that this initiative will incite other actors in Europe and beyond to act accordingly and, in the same spirit, calls upon the EU and its Member States to show leadership by proceeding to effective burden sharing, embracing solidarity and pursuing a firm extraterritorial commitment to have refugees and migrants, in particular children, protected against instrumentalization.



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CARE.
DIGNITY.
EQUALITY.



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