

Dimitris AVRAMOPOULOS

Member of the European Commission

Brussels, 15. 04. 2016
Ares(2016)

Dear President,

I would like to thank you for your letter of 15 March 2016.

I agree with you that migration is a challenge for Europe. We therefore have to stand steadfast in meeting our legal and moral commitments to those who need protection from war and persecution.

I can assure you that the Commission is committed to implement a comprehensive approach to address all aspects of migration based on the principles of responsibility and solidarity. For this approach to succeed, all levels of governance can contribute to deliver on our commitments. In this context, your active policy to assist and integrate migrants in need of international protection in your region is a step in the right direction.

To better share responsibility among Member States, two legally binding decisions establish a temporary and exceptional relocation mechanism for 160,000 applicants from Greece and Italy out of which the Commission proposed that 54 0000 places could also be available for the purpose of resettling Syrians from Turkey to the EU in clear need of international protection. Under this mechanism, Spain committed to assist 6127 migrants (Spain has, so far, only relocated 18 migrants from Italy).

Moreover, Spain also committed to resettle 1449 refugees from refugee camps in the Middle East, Northern Africa and the Horn of Africa in the context of the first EU wide resettlement scheme of 22 504 agreed in July 2015.

For each scheme, the European Union provides Member States with a financial support for each migrant relocated or resettled via the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

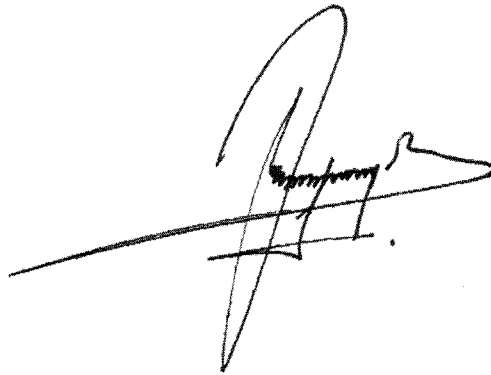
These schemes have to be implemented as a matter of urgency to avoid that a humanitarian crisis develop in Greece and to ensure that the Union takes on its fair share of the global responsibility to provide a safe haven for the world's refugees.

Mr Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó
President of the Government of Catalonia

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I therefore welcome the fact that you are ready to welcome a significant number of refugees. I invite you to coordinate your efforts with the Spanish government which is responsible for the implementation of the relevant EU Decisions. I am copying this letter to my colleague, M. Fernández Díaz, and I am confident that he will support your efforts. The sooner your offer becomes reality, the better for the refugees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dimitris Avramopoulos', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Dimitris AVRAMOPOULOS