

JOINT NGO STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD REFUGEE DAY

Athens 20 June 2013

On the occasion of the World Refugee Day we would like to welcome some developments but also express our concern for certain issues related to refugee protection in Greece.

This year the World Refugee Day coincides with the opening of the New Asylum Service. We welcome this development with great satisfaction, since this has been a demand of the civil society for many years. This civil service brings hope that asylum seekers and refugees will be treated according to international law standards.

However we are deeply concerned by the fact that tens of thousands of pending asylum cases will remain in the responsibility of the Police and also by the fact that at present only one Regional Office of the New Asylum Service has opened in Athens while we don't know when the Regional Offices at the border and the rest of Greece are going to open. These gaps make us very concerned about access to the asylum procedure in the rest of the country and in detention facilities.

We hope that the authorities will immediately take all the necessary steps in order to ensure access to the asylum procedure all over Greece and that they will generally ensure protection for all asylum seekers and refugees.

AITIMA

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL-GREEK SECTION

GREEK COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES

GREEK REFUGEE FORUM

KPSM-ECUMENICAL REFUGEE PROGRAM

NETWORK FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES