

# URGENT ACTION

## UNSAFE REFUGEE CAMPS IN GREECE EVACUATED

**The three refugee camps in the Elliniko area, Athens, were evacuated on 2 June. The majority of refugees and migrants still in the sites were transferred by bus to alternative camps. In the last days before the evacuation residents were finally asked about their specific circumstances but it is still unclear whether everyone has been moved to accommodation adequate to their needs.**

The full evacuation of the three camps in Elliniko, Athens, took place on 2 June in the presence of the Greek police. **Hundreds of refugees and migrants** remaining in the sites were transferred to alternative camps outside of Athens. The three camps are now closed.

Prior to the evacuation, the authorities, with the help of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), started a registration process to identify individual accommodation needs of the residents. According to information gathered by Amnesty International, residents were asked about their specific circumstances, such as the composition of their family, how long they had been in Greece, and whether they had any illnesses. They were later informed about the services available in the place where they were being transferred.

While the launch of this process was a welcome step, before it started, the Greek Ministry for Migration Policy ordered the majority of NGOs providing vital services in the camps to leave. Since 23 May only two organisations were present in the sites to provide medical services and distribute food.

In one of the three camps –the old arrivals terminal of the unused airport- Amnesty International was informed that many residents refused to be registered with the authorities and IOM for their transfer to other accommodation sites. Many explained that they had only received information of their transfer to a different camp outside Athens through an announcement the evening before the evacuation. On the day of the evacuation they were woken up by riot police who entered the building and told them that they needed to leave the site. Amnesty International has also been informed by the Greek police that 69 single men were taken to a police station in Athens for their personal data to be registered. According to the latest information received, the majority of them were subsequently transferred to other camps but at least nine men would still be in detention.

Since April Amnesty International called for a genuine consultation with all residents in the Elliniko camps on alternative accommodation with the view of closing the sites, which were totally unfit to host people. Additionally Amnesty called on the authorities to take into account the specific needs of women and girls; and to consider locations either within or with easy access to Athens, so that residents can continue to receive support from networks they have established during their time in Elliniko, which include medical and mental health treatment.

Amnesty International will continue monitoring the situation on the ground with refugees and other contacts, including the conditions of the alternative accommodation provided to women and girls.

**Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.**

This is the first update of UA 93/17. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR25/6091/2017/en/>

Further information on UA: 93/17 Index: EUR 25/6432/2017 Issue Date: 6 June 2017

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