



*HELLENIC REPUBLIC*  
**GREEK NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

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**GNCHR STATEMENT**

**on the heinous attacks in Paris and appeal to the European Union to  
take all necessary measures for the protection of the rights of *all* those in  
its territory**

*The Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR) is the independent advisory body to the Greek State on matters pertaining to human rights protection. It was established by Law 2667/1998 and is functioning in accordance with the UN Paris Principles. Thirty-two institutions whose activities cover the field of human rights are currently represented in the GNCHR (independent authorities, departments of university-level educational institutions, trade unions, NGOs, political parties and ministries).*

**The Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR) expresses its abhorrence at the terrorist attacks in Paris and appeals to the European Union to take all necessary measures for the security and protection of the rights of *all* those in its territory\***

The GNCHR, the independent advisory body to the Greek State specialised in human rights issues, expresses, in light of the latest dramatic events, its complete solidarity to France and the French people as well as its abhorrence at the terrorist attacks in Paris which resulted in dozens of innocent victims. The GNCHR strongly condemns any acts that jeopardize world peace; disdain and annihilate fundamental conquests of human civilization such as the respect for human value and expresses its extreme concern for the degree to which the European Union (EU) is in a position to guarantee and safeguard fundamental human rights such as the right to life and security of *all* those in its territory.

The GNCHR recalls that, in accordance with its founding treaties, the EU, drawing inspiration from the common cultural and humanist inheritance of Europe from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law, has an obligation to promote peace, the European values and the prosperity of all of its peoples, thus ensuring an area of freedom and safety for all of its citizens, in conjunction with taking appropriate measures with respect to external border controls, asylum, immigration and the prevention and combating of crime.<sup>1</sup> In its relations with the wider world, the EU must uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens; contribute to peace, security, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter.<sup>2</sup> The EU must pursue its objectives by all appropriate means commensurate with the competences which are conferred upon it in the Treaties.<sup>3</sup>

The GNCHR, however, calls upon all actors involved to exhibit responsibility, modesty and self restraint, noting that the reactions to the sought after terror by religious fundamentalists must under no circumstances lead to cases of bigotry, entrenchment and curtailment of basic human rights and individual liberties, even more so when one of the biggest refugee crises of the last ten years is now unfolding, both within and beyond the European borders. To this end, the GNCHR recalls its previous statements on the refugee and migration crisis<sup>4</sup> and notes with great concern that the humanitarian crisis is now leaning towards getting out of control with grave and imminent dangers for the refugees as well as their reception countries. The GNCHR reminds for the umpteenth time that basic human rights of migrants and refugees are at risk as well as the rights of the Greek citizens, especially on the border islands that cannot, as first reception areas, manage the huge migration and refugee flows. There is an urgent need, now more than ever, for the EU, its member states as well as the United Nations, to think about the onus that lies upon them in such a critical juncture in human history and work together for the best possible management of the ever increasing migration flows, while ensuring the respect for human life and dignity, both in the EU as well as the countries of origin. The GNCHR has noted long ago that the EU migration policy, and especially the Dublin system, disregards the obligations to respect and protect human rights as well as the obligations of solidarity and fair burden sharing among the member states, as dictated and enforced by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the EU Treaties.<sup>5</sup>

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\* The present Statement was adopted by the Plenary of the GNCHR, at its session on November the 23<sup>rd</sup> in 2015. Rapporteurs: Angeliki Argyropoulou-Chrysochoidou, First Vice-President of the GNCHR and Anna Eirini Baka, Legal and Research Officer of the GNCHR.

<sup>1</sup> Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, Articles 1 and 2.

<sup>2</sup> Lisbon Treaty, Article 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> GNCHR, Statement, 31.8.2015, “The European Union has to urgently assume its responsibilities and redesign its migration policy”,

[http://www.nchr.gr/images/English\\_Site/NEWS/GNCHR\\_Release\\_on\\_Asylum\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.nchr.gr/images/English_Site/NEWS/GNCHR_Release_on_Asylum_Policy.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Articles 1 of the Charter, 2 and 3 par. 3 EU Treaty and the TEU, as well as article 80 of the TFEU (border monitoring, asylum and migration policy).

**For all the above mentioned reasons, the GNCHR calls upon**

all parties involved and especially the UN, the EU, the EU member states and the European institutions to join and intensify their efforts

**towards**

the promotion of peace as dictated by the EU Treaties and the UN Charter, as well as the promotion of safety of *all* those living in the EU, without, however, making use of terror as pretext for the curtailment of fundamental rights and liberties of the European citizens as well as the thousands of migrants and refugees who enter, or attempt to enter, the EU.