



Bundeskanzleramt

Bundeskanzleramt, 11012 Berlin

Central Union of Municipalities of Greece
KEDE

Hellenic Republic

K. E. Δ. E.

ΚΕΝΤΡΙΚΗ ΕΝΩΣΗ ΔΗΜΩΝ ΕΛΛΑΔΑΣ

ΑΡ. ΠΡΩΤ.: 609_2019

ΗΜΕΡ.: 26/2/2019

Dr. Jan Hecker
Director-General
Foreign Policy and Security Advisor

OFFICE ADDRESS Willy-Brandt-Straße 1, 10557 Berlin

POSTAL ADDRESS 11012 Berlin

PHONE +49 30 18 400-2200

FAX +49 30 18 400-2362

MAILING ADDRESS

Berlin, 21. Februar 2019

Dear Sirs,

On behalf of Federal Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel, I would like to thank you very much for your kind letter of 9 January.

Let me assure you that the Federal government is well aware of the particularly difficult situation on the East Aegean Islands. Even though the number of sea-arrivals has significantly dropped since the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, the continuous presence of many asylum-seekers remains a huge challenge for your local communities. In tackling this challenge, they are assuming a great responsibility – which is for the sake of the European Union as a whole. As Europeans and as close friends, we are most grateful for the great efforts shown so far in your communities.

In our view, a comprehensive implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, notably with a view to swift returns, remains key to impede irregular arrivals and alleviate migratory pressure on the East Aegean Islands. In the meantime, full use should be made of existing EU funding to ensure, on the one hand, decent and sufficient accommodation for asylum-seekers as well as, on the other hand, appropriate support and compensation for the communities concerned. We believe that respective measures could be taken in close cooperation between local and central authorities and the European Commission.

Please rest assured that Germany too will remain a strong supporter in this common European endeavour.

Yours sincerely,