



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF CITIZEN PROTECTION
MINISTER

Athens, 29 November 2019

Dear Commissioner,

I would like to thank you for your letter addressed to me and my colleague, the Alternate Minister Mr George Koumoutsakos, as well as for the fruitful cooperation we have had thus far.

I would hereby like to make a number of clarifications in response to your letter.

It is indeed the intention of the Ministry to proceed with the decongestion of the islands, in order to avert a humanitarian crisis. The people will be transferred from the islands to reception facilities on the mainland, which are currently open reception facilities. Nonetheless, the Government is aiming at implementing entry-exit control systems vis-à-vis mainland facilities:

As regards the islands, the Government is planning to have a facility on each of the five islands, to operate in parallel with existing reception centers. People arriving on the Greek islands following the entry into force of Law 4636/2019, namely as of 1 January 2020, may be placed in a facility, in accordance with the provisions of the said Law.

Finally, and with respect to detention, the new Law regulates the administrative detention of asylum applicants in Article 46, which fully reflects the EU *acquis*. Administrative detention is envisaged in this provision as a means of last resort. As stipulated in the above provision, alternatives to detention may be implemented, as these alternatives are set forth in Article 22 of Law 3907/2011.

In closing, I would like to stress that the Government is committed to creating a fair, sustainable, and crisis-resilient asylum system, in line with the obligations binding upon it under international human rights law.

Sincerely yours

Michalis Chrysochoidis

Mrs Dunja Mijatović
Commissioner for Human Rights
Council of Europe
Strasbourg