



**OUR OBSERVATION AND REPORT ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENTS HAPPENING
AT THE BORDER ONTO THE OPENING OF THE BORDER GATES FOR THE
TRANSITION OF REFUGEES LIVING IN OUR COUNTRY**

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According to the official declaration given by Turkish authorities, Turkey has stopped hindering refugee movement out of Turkish borders to Europe. The influx of refugees has started right after the declaration.

The reason for this act is that Turkey has been carrying the most of the burden of refugees while the rest of the world remain silent to the genocide and atrocities in Syria for 10 years. Turkey has been left alone to aid 2,5 million people trapped in Idlib right now along with hosting more than 4 million refugees within Turkish territory. However recent events showed that Turkey is no longer able to carry this burden alone.

For these reasons Turkey has opened its border gates to the refugees who are willing to cross until further notice.

Four of International Refugee Rights Association delegations were assigned to make observation by the borders. Our committee made an observation at Pazarkule border gate which is our land border with Greece, İpsala, Yeni Karpuzlu and Enez villages. Our committee were able obtain information by interviewing the refugees who are fleeing to the border gates.

Our committee's observations are as follows:



Our Observation and Opinion about the General Situation

1. There are more than 4 million refugees in our country and this process is not sustainable and imposes a serious burden, since EU and other promised aids aren't supplied.
2. After the attack to Turkish troops in Idlib, the racist and xenophobic statements have already been targeted to the refugees more than ever and these perceptions created hostile environment against the refugees.
3. The ways that Greece and Bulgaria confront refugee flow are not considered as humanitarian.
4. Since refugees out of European continent cannot have migrant status in Turkey according to the Geneva Convention 1951, the refugees in Turkey seek to go to Europe in order to have a better social status and registration. Being in between borders makes refugees vulnerable to be abused by the smugglers which causes new victims every day.
5. In accordance with the 1951 Geneva Convention obligations of European countries when asylum-seekers want to transition, there is an obligation to provide status "to people who are outside the country of their nationality and who cannot benefit from the protection of this country because they are rightly afraid that they will be persecuted." In this context, the rejection of people who fall within the scope of irregular migrants and who cannot benefit from the protection of our country by European countries constitutes a contradiction to the obligations of these countries arising from international agreements.



Opening the Gates Results of the fieldwork conducted by our committee: Borders and Check Points

In our fieldwork that coordinated by our committee which commissioned by our central office, our observations regarding “borders and crossing points” are as follows:

1. Greece have been taking aggressive measures against refugees by using tear and fog gas and plastic bullets.
2. Refugees who departed from many provinces of Turkey and flocked European border are composed of mainly nationalities from Syria, Sudan, Algeria, Iran, Morocco, Egypt, Afghanistan, Somalia, Turkmenistan citizens.
3. Thousands of refugees, including children, women, and the elderly are miserably waiting in unhealthy conditions hoping that European doors will open to them soon.
4. When the refugee influx was approaching the borders, the security measures had been increased by Turkish authorities and it was observed that the required provisions were made for potential excesses.
5. Turkey has risen security measures and taken precautions in Turkish side of the border.
6. The refugees who have relatives and acquaintances in European countries are planning to contact them; however, it has been observed that Afghan refugees do not have a route they plan to go if they cross the border.
7. The main reason for all fleeing refugees was that they were unable to obtain Turkish citizenship and suffered economically.



8. According to the interviews we did with some of the refugees returned to Turkey side after crossing the border, the Greek Police detained some refugees and their bags, phones, wallets, passports, and money were seized and some were subjected to actual violence.
9. The host and aid that our country has given to refugees for years continues to be maintained. With the opening of the borders, passes are allowed for those who want to cross voluntarily. No situation such as obligatory transmitting or obliged to leave the country was observed, and no similar case was reported in our interviews in the field.
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Conclusion and Suggestions

1. As the International Refugee Rights Association and a non-governmental organization, we would like to emphasize once again that refugees should not be the victims of any political tensions in any way.
2. First of all, we invite all countries to adopt similar attitudes, especially Greece, which fire tears bombs, plastic bullets at refugees, it is essential to adopt humanitarian attitudes and legal attitudes towards refugees.
3. As a result, whether or not the war in Syria ends, the refugee crisis will continue to be a growing situation. Overcoming the problem should not be considered as an issue of only Turkey and other neighbors of Syria. Today, it seems once again that the refugee



crisis has become a reality that is not only limited to neighboring countries but also directly affects Europe.

4. Europe should help refugees wanting to move to Europe from Turkey as of today's sea and land borders and put aside political, economic, religious and even the legal aspects and take responsibility only with the humanitarian point of view.
5. At this point we invite all states, NGOs, activists to revise their policies and agendas regarding refugees and migrants and come up with sustainable and effective solutions to provide and protect the fundamental human rights of these people. In this respect countries of Europe should open their borders first.
6. As the International Refugee Rights Association and a non-governmental organization, we would like to emphasize once again that refugees should not be victims of any political tensions in any way.
7. We call for the activists, institutions and volunteers to campaign for aid and solidarity. More importantly the attitude of society towards refugees must be friendly. We also call European Parliament to pressure countries to take immediate action.
8. Additionally, we invite organizations like United Nations and European Union to the discuss the possible political solution to end crisis that causes people to be displaced and flee their country and face war, torture, and inhuman actions.
9. Lastly, we call organizations that work for humanitarian aid and relief to be present in the field to assist refugees for legal and humanitarian needs. And provide them food, shelter, security, and so on.



10. In parallel with this purpose, the International Refugee Rights Association, which is a non-governmental organization and a refugee rights advocate that has set out with the motto “A Person is a World”, will continue to work without interruption to reveal the problems encountered in this field and find solutions, to announce rights violations and bring information and understanding about refugees to the rest of the world.

Respectfully announced to the public.