

Dear Council Leader

Although this issue has disappeared from UK news since 2015, the situation for people living in the Greek island camps is now worse than ever. Basic human rights are being denied, including access to shelter, education and drinking water. People are trapped in the Aegean Islands as a result of an inhumane European migration policy.

In March Europe Must Act launched a campaign calling on councils across Europe to make a pledge for the immediate resettlement of asylum seekers from the Aegean hotspot camps. Cities across Europe have already pledged hundreds of places but much more needs to be done.

Scotland is justifiably proud of its record in resettling refugees of the Syrian conflict and I recognise that Dumfries and Galloway have committed to taking 20 child refugees over the next ten years.. However, as you will know, Refugee Resettlement is a reserved matter, so all decisions ultimately sit with the Home Office and the UNHCR. The UK arm of Europe Must Act is therefore preparing to lobby the UK parliament, Home Office and the UNHCR. John Finnie has already raised a [motion](#) on our behalf in the Scottish Parliament which currently has cross-party support from 34 MSPs. Nicola Sturgeon has also expressed support for our campaign and written to Priti Patel urging her: “to take a humane and welcoming approach to the resettlement of these refugees on the Aegean Islands”

The Group Leaders of Aberdeenshire council have written a joint [letter to COSLA](#) in support of the Europe Must Act campaign requesting a joint Scottish effort to relocate refugees from the Aegean. This has been [reported in the Record](#) and you can also read a press article about council support [here](#)

We are now asking your council to support our campaign. We need you to:

- Write a letter addressed to the Home Office, asking the UK government and UNHCR to support the decongestion of the Aegean Island camps and allow UK councils to take inhabitants of these camps as an immediate emergency measure under the new UK Resettlement Scheme
- Pledge to relocate refugees from the Aegean Island camps

Scotland has a proud record of welcoming refugees and Dumfries and Galloway has done a great job in welcoming Syrian families through the VPRS system. We need you to support a humane resettlement process in the UK in the name of justice and humanity. We recognise that Scottish local authorities face many challenges as a result of Covid-19, however, the situation facing the many thousands of extremely vulnerable people in refugee camps is infinitely worse.

Please join us to send the message to Westminster and Holyrood that Scotland welcomes refugees.

Your sincerely,

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