



ΚΑΜΠΑΝΙΑ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΠΡΟΣΒΑΣΗ ΣΤΟ ΑΣΥΛΟ

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STATEMENT*

CEASE THE PROSECUTION AGAINST ACTIVIST TOMMY OLSEN

The arrest of Norwegian activist **Tommy Olsen**, in execution of a European arrest warrant issued by the judicial authorities of Kos for the alleged formation of a criminal organization aimed at facilitating the illegal entry and residence of third country nationals in the country, **constitutes the latest act of prosecution against human rights defenders who have denounced the crime of pushbacks taking place at the Greek borders.**

More than three years ago, the “**Campaign for the Access to Asylum**” had denounced¹ the prosecution against **Panayote Dimitras**, representative of the Greek Helsinki Monitor, for the same case in which activist Tommy Olsen is now facing arrest and extradition to Greece.²

Today, and after it has already been proven, both by decisions of the European Court of Human Rights³ and by reports of independent international⁴ and national human rights protection bodies⁵, that

¹ Asylum Campaign, “No to the Prosecution of Human Rights Defenders”, 19 December 2022, available in Greek at: <https://asylum-campaign.blogspot.com/2022/12/19-2022-1.html>.

²The case concerned the entry into the country, on 13 July 2021, of an asylum seeker who had previously appeared in a BBC report titled 'The EU countries "pushing back" asylum seekers at sea'², available at: <https://bit.ly/3HLdSe1>, denouncing two previous pushbacks he had suffered. One of these pushbacks was even recorded in a video published on 10 June 2021 by the Facebook page of the organization Aegean Boat Report which Tommy Olsen leads.

³ECHR judgments of 7 January 2025, in applications 15783/21 – A.E. v. Greece and 15067/21 – G.R.J. v. Greece.

⁴Submission by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the case of G.R.J. v. Greece (App. No. 15067/21) before the European Court of Human Rights 16 Απριλίου 2024, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/jurisprudence/amicus/unhcr/2024/en/147997>

systematic pushbacks of refugees are carried out at the country's borders, proceedings have been initiated in Greece for the arrest and extradition of one of the most active in this field, who, from Norway, has unceasingly maintained, through personal effort and sacrifice for more than 9 years, an open line of communication with people at risk in the Aegean⁶.

Following the recent acquittal of all members and volunteers of the ERCI organization by a court in Mytilene⁷, **the prosecution against Tommy Olsen is the last open prosecution against human rights defenders as well as search and rescue activists.**

As organizations dedicated to defending refugees and migrants as well as human rights, we can only **demand the cessation of the prosecution against Tommy Olsen** and reinstate the requests of our previous announcement, which unfortunately remain relevant to this day:

The “Campaign for the Access to Asylum” and the organizations co-signing this announcement request from Greek and EU authorities:

- **Stop the prosecution** of individuals and organizations operating as human rights defenders against rights violations, even those committed by state authorities and bodies.
- **Stop the systematic misinformation** against individuals and organizations providing protection to asylum seekers, refugees, and vulnerable persons in general.
- **Promote the investigation** of all complaints that have been brought to the attention of the competent authorities concerning the illegal practice of pushbacks.
- **Stop the systematic violations of fundamental human rights** occurring at the borders of Greece and Europe.

⁵Written submission to the European Court of Human Rights (ThirdSection) made by the Greek National Commission for Human Rights as a thirdparty, in relation to Applications nos. 15067/21 - G.R.J. v. Greece, and15783/21 - A.E. v. Greece 28 ,March 2024, availableat: <https://tinyurl.com/38st5mkr> ,Third party intervention by the Greek Ombudsman,Applications nos. 15067/21- G.R.J. v.Greece, 15783/21- A.E. v. Greece, 26 March2024, available at:<https://tinyurl.com/y3dpb4b9>

⁶<https://www.facebook.com/AegeanBoatReport>

⁷BBC, “Aid workers cleared of human trafficking charges in Greece”, 16 January 2026, available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c98j7n2xj1xo>.

CO- SIGNATORIES

1. Aegean Migrant Solidarity <https://cpt.org/el/aegean-migrant-solidarity>
2. Amnesty International – Greek Section <https://www.amnesty.gr/>
3. Amoqa (Athens Museum of Queer Arts) <https://amoqa.net/>
4. ARSIS-Social Organization for Youth Support <http://arsis.gr>
5. Association of Greek Conscientious Objectors
<https://antirrisies.gr/>
6. Avocats Sans Frontières France www.avocatssansfrontieres-france.org
7. Collective Aid, <https://www.collectiveaidngo.org/>
8. CPT- Aegean Migrant Solidarity <https://cpt.org/el/aegean-migrant-solidarity>
9. Echo100plus <https://echo100plus.com/en>
10. EmpowerVan <https://www.empowervan.org/>
11. Equal Rights Beyond Borders <https://equal-rights.org/>
12. European Association of Lawyers for Democracy & World Human Rights (ELDH), <https://eldh.eu/en/>
13. FemArtAct CoinSEp <https://femartact.gr/>
14. Fenix Humanitarian Legal Aid <https://www.fenixaid.org/>
15. forRefugees (www.forrefugees.org)
16. Greek Council for Refugees <http://www.gcr.gr>
17. Greek Forum of Migrants <http://www.migrant.gr>
18. Greek Forum of Refugees <http://www.refugees.gr>
19. Greek Helsinki Monitor <https://greekhelsinki.wordpress.com/>
20. Greek Housing Network <https://shorturl.at/68BgS>
21. HA – Intereuropean Human Aid Association <https://www.iha.help/>
22. Hellenic League for Human Rights <https://www.hlhr.gr>
23. HIAS Greece <https://hias.org/>
24. Human Rights Legal Project www.humanrightslp.eu
25. Humanist Union of Greece (HUG)
<https://www.facebook.com/humanistuniongreece>
26. KISA - Action for Equality, Support, Antiracism <https://kisa.org.cy/>
27. Legal Centre Lesvos <https://legalcentrelesvos.org/>
28. Mazí Housing <https://www.mazihousing.org/>
29. Médecins Sans Frontières – Greek Section <https://msf.gr/>
30. Minority Rights Group - Greece (MRG-G)
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064809156352>
31. Mobile Info Team <https://www.mobileinfoteam.org/>
32. Network for Children’s Rights <https://ddp.gr>
33. Network for the Social Protection of Refugees & Migrants
<http://migrant.diktio.org> N
34. Northern Lights Aid (NLA)<https://www.northernlightsaid.org/>
35. OXFAM Novib <https://www.oxfam.org>
36. Refugee Support Aegean (RSA) www.rsaegean.org
37. Swiss Democratic Lawyers <https://djs-jds.ch/de/>

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