

URGENT ACTION

REFUGEES ALLOWED ACCESS TO TRANSIT CAMP

A large transit camp with facilities appropriate for cold weather at the Greek border with “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” (Macedonia) is now working at its full capacity providing relief and emergency assistance to refugees arriving in the area with the aim of crossing the border.

Access to the camp in the town of Idomeni had been previously arbitrarily restricted by the Greek police. Thousands of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants had been sleeping out in the open in a gas station in Polikastro, 20 km away, while the camp was empty or partly empty.

According to the latest information from NGOs on the ground, access to the camp has improved considerably and the camp has been operating at full capacity since beginning of February. People arriving at the camp have a heated shelter while waiting to cross the border to “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and NGOs are currently able to offer assistance there.

However, reception capacity in the area is largely insufficient and the conditions refugees, migrants and asylum seekers face at the border remain very critical, especially due to intermittent and arbitrary closures of the Greece-Macedonia border by the Macedonian authorities. Even with the camp working at its full capacity, thousands of people keep travelling on a daily basis to the area where NGOs and volunteers are trying to cover their immediate needs providing them with blankets, food or other needed services in the Polikastro petrol station or right at the border in Idomeni. Amnesty International will keep monitoring the situation.

Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.

This is the first update of UA 16/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR25/3309/2016/en/>

Name: Thousands of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants aiming to cross the northern Greek border with “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”

Gender m/f: all

Further information on UA: 16/16 Index: EUR 25/3385/2016 Issue Date: 3 February 2016

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