

Migration Minister: Greece Will Not Become a Gateway for Illegal Migration

The Greek Migration and Asylum Minister, Notis Mitarachi, said that the country is on *"high alert at the sea and land borders"*, as a major migration crisis is on its way due to Afghanistan being captured by Taliban forces, which is expected to cause a flux in Afghan refugees.

According to a statement made during an interview with the newspaper "Real News", Mitarachi said that the country would not become a portal for illegal migration once again, implying the European migrant crisis in 2010's when 1.3 million refugees entered the European countries, recording the highest number of migrants since World War II.

In addition, thousands of immigrants died almost every year in the last decade while attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea's hundreds of kilometers.

From 2015, the migrants started passing through the Aegean Sea, reaching Turkey and Greece, SchengenVisaInfo.com reports.

Following this turn of events, Greece has just recently finished building a 40-kilometre wall on its borderline with Turkey in a bid to halt the heavy flow of Afghan asylum seekers.

"The only sure thing is that in the face of a possible wave of migration, Greece will not be limited to the role of observer, but will play an active role in the European fora to deal with it effectively," Minister Mitarachi stated.

In another statement made earlier this year, Minister Mitarachi called the secondary movement for migrants and refugees *"out of date concept"*, meaning that refugees and migrants who arrive in Greece will be allowed to travel from there to other European countries freely.

"We're obliged to provide residence permits and travel documents to recognized refugees," Mitarachi noted, later commenting that migrants are more attracted to the EU's higher salaries and benefits.

Furthermore, FRONTEX, European Border and Coast Guard Agency revealed that 17,300 people illegally entered Europe in July, recording a 33 per cent increase compared to the same time in 2020.

According to FRONTEX, the Western Balkan route experienced 3,600 cases of illegal passing in July, marking a 90 per cent increase for this year. The majority of migrants were Syrians, Afghans and Moroccans.

On the other hand, Europe is being overwhelmed by another migration crisis in the east, with Belarusian attempting to enter the neighboring countries of Lithuania, Poland and Latvia after a chaotic political situation is occurring in the country. In July alone, over 3,000 Belarusian illegally entered Lithuania, whereas 180 went to Poland and 200 in Latvia.

Moreover, FRONTEX has accused Greece of “illegal pushbacks” due to the Greek border control that sent back many asylum seekers to the Turkish sea after taking their documents, money and cellphones.

Both countries have witnessed a rapid increase in the number of asylum seekers at borders due to their geographic location, which makes the countries most accessible to asylum seekers.

Source:

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