

Iceland

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Iceland welcomes the delegation of Greece and acknowledges the high standards Greece has maintained in human rights despite confronting "two simultaneous crises" and strict austerity measures at the same time.

Iceland notes the concerns of the Greek National Commission for Human Rights on the impact of austerity policies on the social welfare system of Greece. These concerns are also shared by the Independent Expert of foreign debts who concludes that the measures have been particularly severe for the most vulnerable sectors of the populations: the poor, young people, older persons, pensioners, women, children, people with disabilities and immigrants.

Mindful of its own recent situation, Iceland would like to stress the importance of keeping the social fabric of the society intact. For Greece it is not only the task of the Greek authorities but also its creditors. Let me in this regard refer to the Resolution on the Basic Principles on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes adopted by the General Assembly last September. It promotes orderly, transparent constructive debt structuring process, with durable results. Such an approach is in favour of all stakeholders and upholds the enjoyment of social and economic rights.g

On refugees and migrants, my Delegation is concerned by the poor living conditions at reception facilities, the detention of unaccompanied children and disturbing reports of xenophobic violence and attacks.

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Iceland nevertheless acknowledges Greece's disproportionate share of the responsibility to meet humanitarian needs and a burden that Greece should not face alone. We are all in this together.

Iceland makes the following recommendations to Greece:

- To ensure that Greek legislation fully respects the human rights of refugees and migrants;
- To investigate all cases of xenophobic violence and attacks, including any law enforcement agency involvement in those crimes; and
- To ensure that the authority tasked with the management of EU funds, such as the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, commences operations as swiftly as possible.