

GREECE

2002 COUNTRY

OPERATIONS PLAN

Part I: Executive Committee Summary

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<p>(a) Context and Themes: Greece, being a Member State of the European Union, it is bound by the provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty to participate in the harmonisation of the asylum system within the EU area.</p> <p>Theme 1- <i>quality asylum in a uniting Europe</i></p> <p>Theme 2 - <i>Europe's support to UNHCR and refugees world wide</i></p>	<p>Theme 1- <i>quality asylum in a uniting Europe</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR in Greece will seek to ensure that the principle and institution of asylum is upheld in a manner that meets high international standards in terms of legislation and practice, ensuring that important weaknesses in the current asylum system in Greece are addressed. • UNHCR will monitor, intervene and advocate vis à vis the authorities so that Greece contributes in upholding and safeguarding principles of international protection within the EU harmonisation process. <p><i>Theme 2 – Europe's support to UNHCR and refugees world wide</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To seek support from Greece commensurate to its ability as a developed country that is a State Party to the 1951 Geneva Convention. • To enhance the public's understanding of the protection needs of refugees and raise the public profile of UNHCR • To encourage the private sector to become actively engaged by financially supporting UNHCR's global programme.
<p>(b) Description of Beneficiaries</p>	<p>The main groups of persons that will benefit from UNHCR's operations in Greece include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugees: BO Athens presently assists some 6200 recognised refugees. For 2002, a total of 3,500 recognised refugees (including persons with humanitarian status) will benefit from UNHCR's programme, directly (through financial and legal assistance) or indirectly (through PI and advocacy activities). • Asylum seekers: 3,000 registered asylum applications are currently pending. Based on last year's figures and the trends for the first half of 2001, BO Athens estimates that there will be up to 4,000 registered asylum applicants. • On the basis of statistics on arrests and deportations, BO Athens estimates that some 10,000 persons in need of international protection, do not register as asylum seekers,

	<p>but nevertheless indirectly benefit from UNHCR's programme, through its advocacy activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BO Athens is making contingency plans for a potential influx of up to 20,000 persons from FYROM.
<p>(c) Main Programme Goals</p> <p><i>Theme 1: quality asylum within the EU asylum harmonisation process :</i></p> <p><u>Principal Objectives and related Outputs for Theme 1:</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons in need of international protection will have access to the territories of the EU. • States will develop and gradually harmonise asylum systems in conformity with international standards. • Public opinion will be receptive to the protection needs of refugees and supportive of their integration efforts. • Enabling asylum-seekers to access Greek territory requires the inclusion of adequate protection safeguards in measures to combat illegal migration. • For this objective, the main outputs will be the training of police authorities to differentiate between the treatment of asylum-seekers and migrants, as well as advocacy for a political decision and administrative instructions to exclude asylum-seekers from deterrence measures aimed at illegal immigration. • To develop and harmonise the asylum system, asylum-seekers must have their claims heard fairly and promptly, and • Standards will need to be clarified and improved in respect to the asylum procedure, reception conditions, detention and the socio-economic rights of refugees. • UNHCR, as the agency responsible for refugee protection, gets a higher profile, through a regular and outspoken presence in the media and through an increased range of support groups. • The public at large understands the difference between economic migrants and refugees. A related output will be an enhanced awareness of the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees as the cornerstone of refugee protection. • Xenophobic trends diminish in favour of increased tolerance. This will be sought by enhancing public appreciation of society's enrichment through multiculturalism and sensitising public opinion to perceive xenophobia as a scourge to society.

Main Programme Goals for theme 2 :
Europe's support to UNHCR and refugees
world wide

Principal Objectives and related Outputs for
Theme 2:

Theme 2:

- European Governments, regional organisations and private individuals / corporations will increase their financial support to UNHCR.
- The European people will give more, and better informed, support to UNHCR and to the refugee problem.
- States will actively uphold UNHCR's protection concerns and actively seek solutions to refugee problems internationally.

- Greece will be urged to contribute more to UNHCR, through enhanced contacts with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Finance.
- The output will be a sustainable increase commensurate to Greece's status as an OECD member state.
- Contributions from the private sector will be secured.
- Outputs for private sector fund raising include: (I) a better informed public on global refugee issues, (ii) a positive disposition towards UNHCR and its work and (iii) securing long term financial support by individuals, foundations and corporations with increasing proportions of un-earmarked donations.
- UNHCR's image is recognised, respected and widely viewed as relevant.
- The general public is better educated on global refugee issues and the protection needs of refugees.
- European States will lobby European Governments, the European Commission and the European Parliament to ensure that legislative measures adopted concerning refugees and asylum-seekers are consistent with UNHCR standards and recommendations.