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Minister Michalis Chrisochoidis, Greek Minister for Citizen Protection

Minister Panagiotis Theodorikakos, Greek Minister for the Interior

Strasbourg, December 17th, 2019

Honourable Minister Chrisochoidis,

Honourable Minister Theodorikakos, 1/4

We, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, are writing to you regarding the arrest of the Human Rights Defender and founder of the NGO “Team Humanity” Salam Aldeen on Wednesday, 11th of December 2019. Salam Aldeen is long-term resident in Denmark. We strongly deplore his imprisonment and demand his immediate release.

Mr. Aldeen has been active as a humanitarian emergency worker in Lesbos. There are currently 39.000 refugees on the Greek islands without appropriate care and accommodation. Relief is only provided by the continuous work of Mr. Aldeen and many other volunteers in the camps. By punishing Mr. Aldeen, all humanitarian emergency workers on the ground are threatened.

Greece continues to need help, including from volunteers, to meet the challenges ahead.

Salam Aldeen has previously been charged with human smuggling while working as a lifeguard in Lesbos. In May 2018, he was acquitted of all charges by the Lesbos Court, but has since experienced repeated attempts by the authorities to prevent him from working in humanitarian aid.

Before his arrest, Mr. Aldeen has been declared 'threat to public policy or national security'. He was added to EKANA (National Catalogue of Unwanted Persons) in October 2019 without any notification. While being on that list, he was still able to re-enter Greece twice since October 2019 without any problems.

The detention of Human Rights Defenders by Greek authorities and their categorization as threats to the public is an attack on all those involved in humanitarian work. It is also an attack on Human Rights Defenders around the world when people working for human rights in the European Union are placed on lists set up to fend off terrorism.

We therefore call on you to

- 1. immediately release Salam Aldeen from prison and guarantee his freedom of movement in Greece.**
- 2. guarantee and support humanitarian emergency work in Greece for Mr. Aldeen but also for all other Human Rights Defenders and volunteers.**
- 3. publish the criteria, which have to be fulfilled to be listed in the EKANA or as 'threat to public policy or national security' and to guarantee that Human Rights Defenders will not be put on such lists anymore.**

Yours Sincerely,

Erik Marquardt MEP (Germany, Greens/EFA)

Marie Toussaint MEP (France, Greens/EFA)

Michael Bloss MEP (Germany, Greens/EFA)

Özlem Demirel MEP (Germany, GUE/NGL)

Cornelia Ernst MEP (Germany, GUE/NGL)

Terry Reintke MEP (Germany, Greens/EFA)

Clare Daly MEP (Ireland, GUE/NGL)

Mick Wallace MEP (Ireland, GUE/NGL)
François Alfonsi MEP (France, Greens/EFA)
Monika Vana MEP (Austria, Greens/EFA)
Alexandra Geese MEP (Germany, Greens/EFA)
Malin Björk MEP (Sweden, GUE/NGL)
Margrete Auken MEP (Denmark, Greens/EFA)
Tineke Strik MEP (Netherlands, Greens/EFA)
Saskia Bricmont MEP (Belgium, Greens/EFA)
Delara Burkhardt MEP (Germany, S&D)
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Matt Carthy MEP (Ireland, GUE/NGL)
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Ellie Chowns MEP (UK, Greens/EFA)
Magid Magid MEP (UK, Greens/EFA)
Milan Brglez MEP (Slovenia, S&D)
Shaffaq Mohammed MEP (UK, Renew)

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