

**South-West Asia**

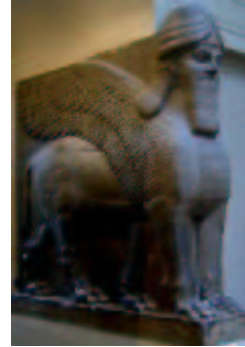


**Buddha (2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD)**

**TREASURES OF  
THE WORLD**

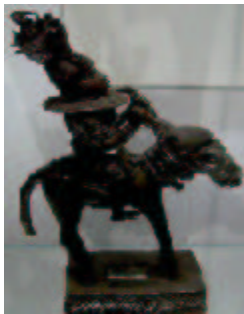
**IF THEY WERE HELD  
IN GREECE, THEY  
WOULD BE  
PROTECTED**

**Iraq**



**Winged human-headed lion  
Assyrian relief (865-860 BC)**

**Nigeria**



**Horseman (16<sup>th</sup> century AD)**

**Egypt**



**Seated Sakhmet, Thebes  
(1400 BC)**

**China**



**Porcelain flask, Ming  
(1426-1435 AD)**

**THESE REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS COME FROM THE SAME  
COUNTRIES. IN GREECE, THEY ARE “PROTECTED” LIKE THIS!**

**DISPLACED PEOPLE OF THE WORLD**



Inside the detention centre of Pagani, Mytilini Island (2005 AD). © Amnesty International

The houses I had they took away from me. The times happened to be unpropitious: war, destruction, exile; sometimes the hunter hits the migratory birds, sometimes he doesn't hit them. Hunting was good in my time, many felt the pellet; the rest circle aimlessly or go mad in the shelters. (.....) they frown or smile or even grow stubborn with those who stayed behind, with those who went away with others who'd come back if they could or others who disappeared, now that the world's become an endless hotel.

(Giorgos Seferis 1900- 1971)  
 Greek Poet – Literature Nobel Prize 1963  
 Extract from *The House near the Sea*.  
 Refugee to Greece in 1922 and from Greece during WWII

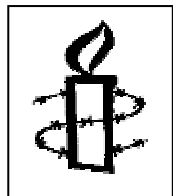
Fleeing from countries at war or from persecution, forced to leave by hunger and poverty, trafficked for sexual exploitation or forced labour, each year thousands of migrants arrive in Greece. Among them are many people who are denied the right to seek asylum. Under international legislation asylum-seekers and migrants should enjoy the full range of human rights, including the right to be free from arbitrary detention and from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Yet the Greek authorities continue to fail to protect asylum-seekers and migrants, from the risk of human rights violations. Among the violations are the conditions of detention under which asylum-seekers and migrants are detained in Greece, in particular vulnerable detainees such as women and minors.

Amnesty International has documented a number of cases highlighting the fate of these people. Many are detained arbitrarily, often without being allowed access to their families, or contact with the outside world for long periods of up to three months and sometimes

repeatedly. Conditions of detention in some cases amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. In particular detainees have reported overcrowded cells, lack of mattresses and beds, no hot water or bath facilities, rationed toiletries, no medical care, no access to open air. Some detainees were beaten and ill-treated by police officers and women reported having been raped.



## THIS MUST STOP!



**HELP** Amnesty International's Campaign on behalf of refugees and migrants in Greece (our report is available here: <http://web.amnesty.org/library/print/ENGEUR250162005>). **Please sign the letter attached and send it to the Greek Prime Minister.**

Map ©www.lib.utexas.edu

Mr Kostas Karamanlis  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Megaron Maximou  
19 Herodou Atticou Avenue  
106 74 Athens  
Greece

*date*

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you to express my concern at the treatment of migrants and asylum-seekers arriving in Greece.

According to Amnesty International irregular or undocumented migrants without papers as well as asylum-seekers may be detained for periods of up to three months, sometimes repeatedly.

In addition, Amnesty International highlights the problems of overcrowding inside detention centres, resulting in detainees being sometimes denied the opportunity to exercise in a sufficiently large outdoor space. Some detainees, as well as their guards, have also reported the spread of scabies among detainees, a condition exacerbated by the lack of hygienic conditions in the centres. Many have complained to Amnesty International's representatives about a shortage of beds and mattresses as well as showers and toilets. I believe that such detention conditions contravene Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (to which Greece is a State Party), which prohibits cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

I would also like to express my concern about the detention of unaccompanied minors in facilities together with adults. Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Greece is a State Party, the Greek government has a duty to ensure that measures are taken to support the child according to his or her needs, and that children should not be detained together with adults unless it is in their best interests. Children being released from detention should have their safety secured too.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that sufficient measures have not been taken to protect other vulnerable groups of detained migrants, such as women. I am concerned at reports that male guards are able to access the dormitories where women are held, and, in the case of the Amygdaleza detention centre, have given them alcohol in an attempt to extract sexual favours.

I urge you as the Prime Minister to take measures to ensure that the poor conditions outlined above are immediately improved, in order to honour the commitments that Greece has made under international human rights treaties. In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to ask you to:

- prohibit arbitrary detention, including the detention of unaccompanied children and ensure that there is a presumption against the detention of women with children;
- ensure that female staff are employed in centres where women are held, in order to ensure the physical protection of women in the centres;
- provide training for all officers and other staff involved in the running of detention centres on how to recognize possible symptoms of stress reactions displayed by detainees, whether post-traumatic or caused by socio-cultural changes.

Yours sincerely,

Signature:

Name: