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[Press release](#) | 02.03.2020

Europe must protect human rights and the rule of law

Situation on the Greece-Turkey border

Commenting on the situation on the border between Greece and Turkey and the violence against refugees on the ground, **Ska Keller**, co-president of the Greens/EFA group, said:

"We need a common European effort to protect human rights and the rule of law at Europe's external borders. It is shameful that refugees are beaten away at European borders with batons and tear gas and when the Greek military conjures up civil war-like scenes against refugees. Europe's response to Erdogan's unspeakable instrumentalisation of refugees must not be to retaliate with the same methods, but instead should be to uphold the rule of law and human rights."

"At the same time, the humanitarian catastrophe in northern Syria around Idlib must be addressed. Here too, the European Union must ask itself what it is prepared to do to help people in need. It is not acceptable that people there flee the bombs being dropped on them and then get stuck at borders and freeze to death. Europe must act now and be prepared both to accept refugees from northern Syria and to significantly increase the pressure on the warring parties on the ground."

Philippe Lamberts, co-president of the Greens/EFA Group, said:

"The brutality currently being suffered by refugees who are landlocked on the borders of Greece must stop immediately. We demand that the European border management agency Frontex ensure that the rule of law is restored and that respect for human rights is guaranteed at the EU's external borders."

"We call on the Member States to organise the transfer of asylum seekers from the Greek islands to the mainland and other European countries without delay. Greece alone cannot cope with this new influx of refugees and joint European action is needed. By showing themselves incapable of resolving the refugee reception crisis, European leaders have reinforced Erdogan's hand, who is now using refugees to the detriment of all."

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