

COMMENTS

ACCOUNTABILITY ADRIFT IN GREEK WATERS

ADDENDUM
JANUARY 2026

Addressing human rights violations
in Greek Coast Guard border management operations

**stiftung
PRO ASYL**

RSA
REFUGEE SUPPORT AEGEAN

1. The present note to the Committee of Ministers (hereafter “the Committee”) is an addendum to the Rule 9.2 submission made by Refugee Support Aegean (RSA) and Stiftung PRO ASYL in November 2025 on a series of cases decided by the European Court of Human Rights (hereafter “the Court”) from 2022 to present in relation to violations of human rights perpetrated by Greek law enforcement bodies in the context of border management operations.¹
2. The **F.M. v. Greece** judgment became final on 14 January 2026.² We would thereby urge the Committee of Ministers to incorporate **F.M.** into the supervision of **Safi and Others v. Greece**,³ **Alkhatib v. Greece**⁴ and **Almukhlas & Al-Maliki v. Greece**.⁵ These cases should be classified under enhanced supervision for reasons of complex problem, as detailed in the observations made in our November 2025 submission as regards the substantive and procedural aspects of Article 2 of the Convention raised by the Court.
3. In addition, we take note of the information provided by the Greek government in its December 2025 Action Report⁶ in view of the upcoming examination of the **Alkhatib** and **Almukhlas** cases at the 1553DH meeting of 9-11 March 2026, and wish to draw the attention of the Committee to the following elements relating to general measures:
4. **Amendment of rules of engagement and use of firearms legislation:** We remind that the findings of the Court in **Alkhatib** on domestic rules applicable to border management operations are not limited to legislation on the use of firearms. The Court also paid due regard to the “rules of engagement” (οδηγίες εμπλοκής), their inadequacy and their potential incompatibility with the legal framework on the use of firearms.⁷ In view of the above, general measures aimed at aligning the applicable domestic framework to ensure that Hellenic Coast Guard officers pay due consideration to the possible presence of people seeking asylum and other vulnerable persons on board boats arriving or present in Greek territorial waters and award the utmost priority to the protection of the life and safety of passengers should cover both firearms legislation and rules of engagement used or considered by the responsible Coast Guard authorities.
5. **Digital recording of Hellenic Coast Guard operations:** All vessels engaging in border management operations should carry video recording equipment and such equipment should be functioning in practice. The Committee should therefore request concrete measures on revision of the authorities' camera use policy,⁸ with a view to ensuring that (i) cameras are installed in all Hellenic Coast Guard vessels engaging in border management operations and record those operations, without exception, (ii) the authorities perform a comprehensive inventory of non-functioning cameras and deliver a concrete plan to restore their operation within a specified timeframe.

¹ DH-DD(2025)1404.

² ECtHR, *F.M. and Others v. Greece*, App No 17622/21, 14 October 2025.

³ ECtHR, *Safi and Others v. Greece*, App No 5418/15, 7 July 2022.

⁴ ECtHR, *Alkhatib v. Greece*, App No 3566/16, 16 January 2024.

⁵ ECtHR, *Almukhlas & Al-Maliki v. Greece*, App No 22776/18, 25 March 2025.

⁶ DH-DD(2025)1506, 32.

⁷ ECtHR, *Alkhatib v. Greece*, paras 131-132, 140.

⁸ Contrary to the views expressed in DH-DD(2025)1506, 30.

6. **Investigations into allegations of ill-treatment by Hellenic Coast Guard officers:** Official information corroborates the concerns outlined in our November 2025 submission regarding the lack of effectiveness of investigations into alleged ill-treatment by Coast Guard officers. The Action Report of the Greek government states that no criminal charges have been brought against Hellenic Coast Guard officers for "torture and other violations of human dignity, bodily harm and unlawful acts of violence" in 2023.⁹ No specific data have been provided in the Action Report on cases treated by the Naval Court Prosecutor, responsible for criminal proceedings against Coast Guard officers.
7. In addition, official figures supplied by the Greek government in a November 2025 response to parliamentary questions confirm that none of the 42 Sworn Administrative Inquiries ('Ενορκες Διοικητικές Εξετάσεις, EDE) carried out from in the last five years have resulted in disciplinary action against Coast Guard officers for conduct amounting to breach of human rights.¹⁰ The Action Report confirms this as regards EDE performed in 2025.¹¹
8. In view of the above, we urge the Committee to request additional measures aimed at ensuring effectiveness of investigations in practice and point to our November 2025 recommendations in that respect. In addition, the instructions issued by the Hellenic Coast Guard, namely the "Order accompanied by a Handbook providing guidance on pre-trial procedure and collecting evidence" and "Directions to Port Authorities... during body searches and investigative acts",¹² should be transparent and publicly accessible, as is the case for instructions to Public Prosecutors responsible for investigating acts performed by Hellenic Police officers.¹³
9. We reiterate the remainder of the observations and recommendations made to the Committee in our November 2025 submission.

⁹ DH-DD(2025)1506, 18. This appears to be contradicted later in the Action Report: "Each year, only a few prosecutions (3-4) individuals in total are brought against coast guard officers (2023: 3, 2024: 4)": DH-DD(2025)1506, 20. It is not clear whether these prosecutions concern the offences in question.

¹⁰ Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Island Policy, Reply to parliamentary question, 1500.1/86057/2025/496, 28 November 2025, available [here](#): "... in the last five years, forty-two (42) EDE have been conducted into complaints relating to alleged violations of fundamental rights, which have not identified commission of disciplinary offences on the part of Hellenic Coast Guard officers."

¹¹ DH-DD(2025)1506, 32.

¹² *Ibid*, 30.

¹³ Namely, Supreme Court Prosecutor, Circular 1/2023, 3 January 2023, available [here](#).



<https://rsaegean.org/accountability-adrift-in-greek-waters/>



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