

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN
CONSULATE
MIDDLE EAST

Report:

A Survey of Christian Refugees in Greece to Determine their Condition as a Minority Group within the Refugee Population

Findings and Recommendations

April 2016

**SURVEY OF CHRISTIAN REFUGEES IN THE REGION OF ATTICA, GREECE
TO DETERMINE THEIR CONDITION AS A MINORITY GROUP WITHIN THE REFUGEE POPULATION**

International Christian Consulate

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Summary:

A survey of the Christian minority within the overall refugee population in Greece has highlighted an urgent need for action. There is a serious lack of understanding of the specific vulnerabilities faced by minority groups within the wider refugee population. Christians interviewed felt afraid for their lives in the camps because of their religion. Testimonies consistently bore witness to the specific targeting of Christians and the threat to their physical safety as a result. Such testimonies included targeted attacks involving beatings with wood, cables, pipes; threats at knife-point; gang rape; daily death threats and intimidation, including threats of beheading; as well as destruction of property and slashing of tents. With the hot summer weather approaching, conditions in the camps are likely to deteriorate, along with the mental health of the Christian minority who are forced to live covertly among radicalised Muslims, some of whom openly claim to be Daesh.

There is a very real and pressing need to segregate people groups within the camps. Western governments and those involved in providing aid to this humanitarian crisis must consider and address the needs of minority groups. If they do not, they are neglecting their duty to protect the human rights of all people. A Christian 'Hospitality Centre' is urgently needed in Athens to provide a safe haven for this extremely vulnerable minority group.

Introduction

The situation in the Middle East has destabilised to such an extent that it has resulted in the biggest population displacement known in Europe since the Second World War. In recent months this has reached crisis point in many European countries, not least in Greece. Greece is a country already in a very precarious position, with its extensive economic difficulties and high levels of indigenous poverty. This has led to an overlap of two crises, increasing the gravity of the challenges Greece is currently facing.

Since the EU-Turkey deal over migrants, Greece's role has had to significantly shift. Prior to the agreement, migrants tended to use Greece as a stopover on their way to the rest of Europe. With the borders now closed in the north, migrants who never intended on staying in Greece, find themselves stuck with nowhere to go. Vast numbers are now being housed in state-run refugee camps and detention centres, as well as private camps or "squats" run by anarchist groups across Athens. Additionally there is some alternative accommodation provided on a smaller scale by NGOs and church initiatives.

Refugees arriving in Greece come from many countries including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Morocco, Sudan, Iraq, Syria, Iran, Libya and Ethiopia, and this is not a new phenomenon. There has been a steady flow of refugees into Greece for more than a decade, but in the last 24 months the country has witnessed a massive escalation in volume. Whilst the war in Iraq and Syria has unquestionably triggered mass migration from those regions, it is no longer accurate to claim that the majority of refugees now arriving in Greece are Syrian. The flow of Syrians has gradually decreased, and Greece is seeing a different demographic make-up of the refugee population to that which existed at the beginning of the crisis. To be sure, some of the migrants are seeking better economical conditions, but there are many genuine refugees having fled the Syrian conflict, the threat posed by Daesh, rebel groups, the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan and threats from Islamist regimes in other regions.

With such a range of ethnicities, there are many ethnic complexities woven throughout the migrant population, and this is creating challenges and perpetuating ethnic-related conflicts within the population. The majority of migrants are members of the Muslim faith, but there are religious minority groups such as Christians and Yezidis as well. For example, Greece currently has around

50,000 migrants/refugees on its soil. Out of these, it is estimated that 3000 of these are Christian, which is about 6% of the total migrant population. Exact numbers are hard to determine, as the Christians are afraid to reveal their religious affiliation – with good reason.

In general, the specific vulnerabilities of these minority groups is not considered, and as a consequence they are suffering above and beyond the terrible conditions and situations endured by the migrant population as a whole. Certainly there is suffering and need across the board, whether Christian, Muslim, Yezidi, Iraqi, Syrian, Iranian, or any other ethnic group. However, there is a duty to consider the most vulnerable and those at risk of specific and direct additional threats because of their minority status. Since this sub-section of the population has been generally overlooked, there is little hard evidence or documented information about their condition. Thus, their vulnerabilities and specific needs are not being considered. This is a failure on the part of those claiming to protect the human rights of all people.

In this context, the International Christian Consulate (ICC) went to Greece in an attempt to begin collecting documented information on the condition of Christian refugees, as well as evidence of them being targeted in the camps because of their religion. There has been much debate over whether the action of Daesh in Iraq and Syria against minority groups including Christians, constitute genocide and war crimes. If Christians are being directly targeted with the intention of killing them on the basis of their religion, this is likely to be reflected in the camps. This is particularly the case if as suspected, there are Daesh affiliates and sympathisers within the refugee population.

During the course of 10 days, ICC interviews were conducted with family groups of Christian refugees, covering a sample of 65 people. The majority were living in refugee camps in the Attica region of Greece. Questions based on the Darfur Genocide Questionnaire were used to ask specific questions about their backgrounds, experiences as minority group refugees, as well as their condition.

The purpose of this report is to publicise the results of the survey, and to strongly urge governments, NGOs and official agencies to consider the needs of this at-risk minority group. It has become extremely apparent that the lives of Christian refugees in the camps are threatened daily, and it is only a matter of time before the situation escalates. There is an urgent need to reconsider official policies in order to include the need to protect minority groups. If this is not addressed, there is a serious question over the implementation of humanitarian assistance claiming to protect the human rights of all people – because it refuses to acknowledge the need to protect those at risk of further and targeted human rights violations as a direct result of their minority status.

Analysis of Findings

1. Identity and demographics

The sample consisted of 65 Christian refugees, all interviewed at [REDACTED], Attica, Greece. The mean number of people per household was 2.6. In total, including children, 60% of this sample were male and 40% were female. 23% of the male sample was under 18 years old; 35% of the female sample was under 18. Of the adults in the sample, 62% were male and 38% Female respondents, of which 17% were pregnant. The mean age of the adult male sample was 31 years (median = 30, mode = 25) and of the adult female sample it was 30 years (median = 29, mode = 26).

94% of respondents were Iranian Christians, 6% were Afghan Christians. Before they became refugees, 86% were living in Iran; 5% were living in Malaysia; 6% were living in Afghanistan and 3% were living in Iraq. The majority were living in Tehran or Shiraz in Iran before they became a refugee. Other Iranian towns included Isfahan, Ahvaz, Bogenord, Bandaramzale and Mashhad. Outside of Iran, respondents were living in Irbil in Iraq/Kurdistan, Heraat in Afghanistan or Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia.

Many of the refugees interviewed were Iranian apostates. Some had converted recently, others had lived covert Christian lives for years. Their stories shared common themes - that their faith had been

exposed and the Iranian authorities and their communities or families had rejected them, making life impossible to stay. See section 4.

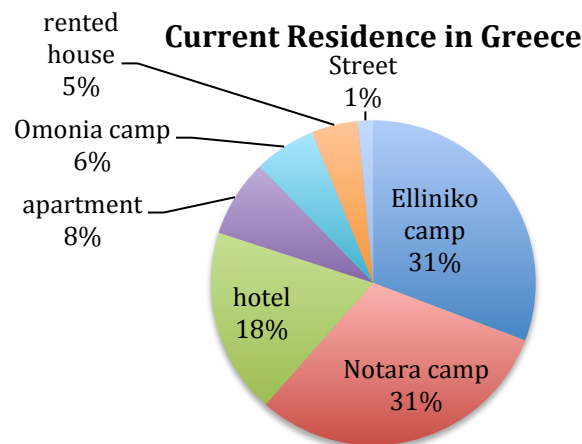
In terms of professional skills, 94% of respondents were economically active, with 37% employed in industrial/craftwork jobs, 17% were public sector workers, 17% were employed in a bank or private company, 23% in retail or trade. 6% of respondents were either unemployed or housewives.

2. Reason for Migration

The primary reason for migration from their home country was persecution as a result of their religious beliefs. Many of the respondents were persecuted from a variety of sources: 50% reported that they were persecuted by the government or by regime police; 20% reported they experienced persecution from family members or their community; 13% experienced persecution by extremist groups including the Taliban and Daesh and 23% reported that they left because they felt under threat of death or persecution in their home country, as opposed to having directly experienced it. 3% reported that they had migrated for other reasons.

3. Residence in Greece

The average amount of time elapsed since leaving their home countries was 3 months. The longest was 7 months. Some of the respondents had stayed in several different places since arriving in Greece. We asked where they were currently staying at the time of the interview. The refugee camps in Greece fall into various sub-categories. There are the temporary camps such as Piraeus port or Idomeni, camps that have evolved out of necessity. There are temporary camps on the islands close to Turkey where many land. The Greek government has set up state-run camps such as Elliniko but have also begun establishing 'detention centres' to which many of the temporary camp occupants are being moved. There are also 'anarchist camps' such as Notara in central Athens. These are privately run by anarchist groups from Greece's left wing communities and are well supported and supplied. At the smaller end of the scale are private initiatives run and financed by small groups and even individuals.



Apartments:

Of those staying in apartments, 100% had moved into an apartment, with the help of [REDACTED], from either Piraeus or Elliniko camps because they felt their lives were at risk because of being a Christian in those environments.

Hotels:

17% of those staying in hotels had been urgently moved to a hotel by the church in order to protect them from threats to their lives and physical safety. The remaining 83% were paying for hotels themselves to avoid for as long as possible having to stay in one of the camps. This was for two

reasons: firstly to stay away from groups within the refugee population that are threatening Christian refugees; and secondly, to have better living conditions.

Rented house:

100% of those in a rented house, had moved there after having stayed in several camps, moving around to try to avoid being attacked or threatened as a result of being a Christian. These were assisted using limited resources of their church at [REDACTED]. One of the church pastors had paid for an apartment out of her own money, because she was afraid for their safety in the camp.

Street:

One of the respondents had previously been sharing an apartment with a group of Afghan men, who did not know he was a Christian. When they found out, they threatened to kill him and he had to flee to the streets, leaving all of his belongings behind. When we interviewed him, he was living on the streets, with nothing but the clothes he was standing up in.

Elliniko Camp:

A large proportion of our sample (31%) were staying in Elliniko camp – a government run refugee camp, near the old airport in Glyfada. Virtually every single respondent from this camp expressed fear of attacks, threats and even death by Muslim refugees in the camp (particularly Afghani, Pakistani and Moroccans). All of them felt unsafe in this camp because of their Christian faith, and all of them were going to great lengths to try to hide the fact they were Christian, in order to prevent attacks and threats.

Notara Camp:

Notara camp is one of several anarchist 'squats' in Athens. These have much better living conditions compared with the government run camps, with hot food, good medical supplies and a level of protection. Respondents staying here largely reported that they had not witnessed or experienced attacks or direct threats because of their Christian faith, but emphasised that this was because they had to hide their faith. Frequently, they added that if they were found out to be a Christian, they would not be allowed to continue staying there, and they were afraid to even get out their bibles to read. Many reported they had to lie about where they were going on Sundays, for fear of being discovered. They expressed fear of being discovered to be Christian by their fellow non-Christian refugees in the camp, particularly the Afghans.

3.1 Journey to Greece

With the exception of one family, all the respondents travelled to Greece from the Middle East. Of those, 19% travelled from their country of origin to Turkey by aeroplane. The remaining 81% used smugglers, travelling by foot over the mountains to get to Turkey. 100% of all respondents, travelled from Turkey by boats provided by smugglers, arriving at one of Greece's Islands. 65% arrived on the island of Lesbos; 35% on Chios. Smuggler fees for this leg of their journey ranged from 900 - 3000 USD, with a mean of 1500 USD per person, and half of that for each child.

3.2 General condition of the camps

Greece faces vast challenges providing for its own indigenous population, and it is understandable therefore that they are struggling with the extra burden of tens of thousands of migrants all in need. The unfortunate consequence of both this and the very apparent lack of co-ordination between NGOs, aid agencies and government departments, is that the living conditions of the vast majority of migrants, whether Christian or not, are dire. Most of the migrants have little or no belongings or resources, and are thus dependent on aid and the help of NGOs and agencies. Of the respondents living in the government-run camps, there was real despair at the state of their living conditions. There were reports of sickness, regular bouts of food poisoning, the spread of lice and scabies and extremely poor sanitation – toilets were beyond filthy, and everywhere in the camps was dirty. Many of the migrants interviewed stated that they were hungry, hadn't eaten in several days, or that the food they received at the camps was very poor quality, served cold and not enough. There were several reports of children having lost considerable amount of bodyweight in a relatively short period

of time. The women regularly reported that they felt unsafe using the bathroom facilities in the camp, for fear of being abused. Camp volunteers and a doctor working for an NGO outside of the camps informed us that they were increasingly seeing instances of tuberculosis, and there was real concern about this spreading. There were also numerous reports of gang fights in the camps as a result of ethnic tensions and this is a real problem, which has not been adequately addressed.

“You can’t imagine the situation in Elliniko camp, it is so bad”

“If you went to Elliniko camp, then you would understand how bad it is”

People who would ordinarily be segregated for religious/political reasons at home, are forced to live together in cramped, dirty, un-policed camps, which after dark become places of fear, intimidation and jungle law. In addition there are also signs that right wing elements of Greek society are becoming active. During this investigation, it was reported that the right wing movement “Golden Dawn” were threatening refugees, and had even been throwing hand grenades into camps and have attempted to physically remove ‘non-Greeks’ from trains and public areas.

The UNCHR is particularly notable by its absence in the camps. Not a single respondent in our sample had received any aid or support from the UN and laughed when asked how the UN had helped them since they left their home countries. They stated things like “The UN does nothing to help us. They are liars”; “I thought they were supposed to help us, but they haven’t done a single thing to help”. One respondent answered by genuinely asking “what’s the UN?”. The only evidence of a UNHCR presence was a few branded marquee tents and blankets in Piraeus port.

4. Condition of Christian Refugees as a Minority Group

Whilst conditions are extremely poor for migrants generally in Greece, with people of all ethnicities and religious affiliation suffering greatly as a result, there are specific issues in addition to these, facing the Christian minority within the general population. These issues are potentially life-threatening, and are of extreme concern. We cannot emphasize strongly enough the need to address the needs of this particularly vulnerable and at risk sub-group within the broader migrant population.

4.1 Reports from Volunteers, Church Leaders and Officials

Christos Psaltis (Political Officer - UK Embassy Athens) confirmed there was little inter-agency coordination for refugee aid work and support. It was confirmed that DFID support some aid projects in Greece providing tents and blankets etc. He stated there was a general lack of understanding of minority issues such as we presented for the Christians, and confirmed that policies tended to treat them all as just migrants en-masse. He shared that the Greek Orthodox Church is very interested in protecting persecuted believers in the Middle East and therefore would be worth meeting with the Bishop of Athens as the situation for Christians was one of great concern. He stated there are still huge bureaucratic problems following the financial crisis with top-heavy administrations, that Greece has a *laissez-faire* approach to the problem, and that nothing was going to happen fast in terms of changes of approach.

Fr. Iakovos (Greek Orthodox Priest in the Office of the Metropolis) expressed his concern, and that of his bishop, about the condition and safety of Christian refugees. He spoke openly about the situation and shared his concern for all of the refugees, but acknowledged that the Christian minority amongst them was at real risk. He expressed the urgency of segregating them from other groups in the camps, and shared that they felt there was a need to set up a “hospitality centre” for Christians, so that they could be housed away from the dangers of the camps. He reported that they had grave concerns about the escalation of attacks and threats in the camps, particularly with the hot weather now beginning. He spoke to his bishop and they have offered the ICC their support, including the provision of the piece of land required and the use of a Greek NGO to deal with Greek legal particulars. He stated that this needed to be set up as a matter of urgency, ideally within the next month, otherwise there will potentially be fatalities and increasingly severe attacks on the Christian population. There is now a pressing need to find donors to enable this to move forward.

Geoff (US doctor, volunteering with Christian refugees) spoke about the medical condition of the Christians in the camps. He shared that the types of illnesses and medical problems he was coming across were associated with the living conditions of the refugees and the attacks and threats the Christians specifically are dealing with. He stated that their mental health was fairly good but he expected this to rapidly deteriorate if the stories he was hearing about treatment of Christians in the camps are true. He stated:

“these people are *seriously* threatened, because they are forthright about their faith, and that is extraordinarily dangerous in these camps”.

He shared his experiences of working in the camps and some of the comments he made included:

“(the camp) would have been fine if you were a Muslim. I wouldn’t even *think* of going there as a Christian trying to live there... If you’re a Christian in there, you can forget about it - it would be really dangerous.”

“Unfortunately, they left Iran, and showed up in Iran. These camps are like mini Iran or mini Afghanistan, with the same persecution as what they left in their home countries. I can see that even from what I’m looking at medically.”

“I think Christians are most at risk in the camps... if there is a Christian person or a Jewish person in those camps, they are very, very vulnerable and very threatened.”

██████ (evangelical Christian leader of a medical project for refugees), herself a refugee from Iran sixteen years ago, stated Christian women had been raped by Afghan Islamists in the camp – one was recently gang-raped by six men and is now pregnant as a result. The project is working to try and place her in a home for her safety. A number of Christian women refugees are pregnant and the camps have no facilities or services for them. She takes the women to her own gynecologist who has offered his services free and opens his clinic voluntarily on his ‘day off’ to see the women. Other anecdotal stories included: the use of Muslim Afghan translators by the UN and other agencies, making it difficult for Christian refugees to be open about their situations when applying for asylum or refugee status; and Christians being moved out of the camps because of severe threat to their lives. ██████ is working closely with Christian refugees on a daily basis and is overwhelmed by the needs of this vulnerable group. They are constantly sharing stories of attacks and threats in the camps by Muslim refugees because of their Christian faith, and all are very fearful for their safety.

4.2 Refugee Testimonies of Targeted Attacks Experienced in the Camps and by Other Migrants

Interviewees were asked whether they had personally witnessed or experienced attacks in the camps, specifically because of their Christian beliefs. The vast majority (87%) of respondents had either witnessed or experienced first hand, attacks and threats in the refugee camps explicitly because they are Christian. They claim to be verbally threatened or abused on a daily basis, as reflected in the sample of responses below:

“In the camp the Muslims come up to me and say ‘if anyone converts from their religion, we must kill them. If we kill converts we will go directly to heaven’. They don’t think that we are human... and said if they find Christians alone in the camp, they will kill them.” – ██████, age 28

“In the camp they verbally abuse and threaten us. The Afghans say ‘you are a heretic, you will die.’” – ██████, age 32

“My 13-year-old son was threatened with beheading by other refugees from Elliniko camp. 3 – 4 people, aged around 40 years old who said they are Daesh, showed him mobile video and pictures of Christians being beheaded. They told him they are coming for him and his family to cut off their

heads too. They told him they would use tin cans to cut off our heads in the camp. My son has not spoken since.” – ██████, age 45

“The other refugees say if anyone is not Muslim then they are not human and we must kill them.” – ██████, age 30

“I cannot speak about my faith in the camp – the Arab and Afghan people believe that if they kill converts, they will get a good gift from God. They told us this.” – ██████, age 36

“We have been threatened by Afghans in the camp – they are threatening to kill us because we are Christians. They know we go to church. I have to lie and pretend. We are scared. There is fighting every day in the camps. They use knives sometimes.” – ██████, age 48

In addition to verbal threats, respondents reported having witnessed and experienced numerous physical attacks, which they claim occur regularly, both inside and outside of the camps and are perpetrated by fellow refugees. Based on the severity of some of these attacks, it is hardly surprising that every Christian we interviewed expressed great fear for their safety because of their faith. A sample of the accounts of targeted attacks, either witnessed or experienced, is given below:

“They (Afghan muslims in the camp) attacked me for 48 hours because I was talking about my Christian faith and I had a bible with me. After 2 nights, I looked like a dead person. I was beaten in the head and beaten with wire and cables. It was only me and my friend but there were about 100 of them. Only God saved us.” – ██████, age 31

“I was beaten in Elliniko camp for 5 hours. We called the police but they didn’t do anything. Some of my friends got injured too. They were Arabs and Afghans and they told us that if they see us in the street they will attack us because we are Christian.” – ██████, age 28

“I was injured in an attack in Elliniko camp, by a gang of around 80 Afghans. I was beaten so badly that I was in hospital for three days with an abdominal injury, which I need surgery for. I am in constant pain since the attack. They threatened to kill Iranians but me even more because I am a Christian.” – ██████, age 50

“When some fanatic Muslims (there were 5 of them and they were Afghan) in the camp saw me with my bible in my hand, they hit me. My teeth were broken.” – Salman, age 33

“I was attacked 3 times because I am a Christian – they attacked my tent, slashing it with knives, and they beat me with pipes, leather and wood.” – ██████, age 25

“In Piraeus camp, some Arabs and Afghans attacked Christians. One needed hospitalisation because of a head injury and broken arm. We saw fanatic Muslims fighting against Christians. There were so many of them I couldn’t count how many there were – they purposefully came together to attack Christians.” – ██████, age 38

“I saw Muslims making trouble for the Christians in the camps. I tried to stop them but I had to be careful because I have a young daughter. I saw this happening in all three camps I have been to.” – ██████, age 32

“9 people attacked me in Elliniko camp, with bits of wood from palettes, which had nails in them. Some of my friends had head injuries and broken arms but the police didn’t take any action.” – ██████, age 28

One third of the respondents personally experienced physical attacks because of their religion, some of which were extremely serious, requiring hospitalisation, and several had been physically attacked repeatedly. All of the respondents who had not witnessed or experienced threats/attacks stated that

the reason for this was because they were going to great lengths to hide their Christian identity, or they were staying away from the camps or other refugees. For example:

“We don’t let any Afghani or Muslim people know that we are Christian – we must pretend to be Muslim. We have heard of many Christians having problems here because of their religion. We are using all of the money we have to pay for a hotel to try and keep out of the way – it is not safe.”

They, along with the rest of the respondents, expressed their fear and desperation over the risks to their lives because of their Christian faith. One family said in exasperation “At least in our home country, they would kill us quickly with a bullet for being a Christian. Here, they want to kill us by torturing us and slowing cutting of our heads. It is worse than what we left!”

4.3 Fear for safety

There are high levels of anxiety amongst the Christian refugees surveyed, directly related to the fear of being hurt or killed as a result of their faith. Many reported that they struggle to sleep at night because they are afraid of being attacked while they sleep, or because of the stress of being targeted on a regular basis. They do not feel protected by the Greek authorities or the camp managers, and certainly not by the UN. They frequently reported that the police and camp staff kept out of the way when violence was occurring because the perpetrators outnumber them. Additionally, they claim that all camp staff, police, security and volunteers leave the camp premises after 9pm every day, not returning until around 10am the next day, leaving vulnerable groups even more unprotected.

One family felt so afraid and at risk of serious harm that they chose to go and sleep rough rather than stay in the camps:

“In the camp on Lesbos, the Afghans treated us badly because we are Christian. The problems we have been having with the Afghans has been wherever we have gone – from the camp in Mitilini to Elliniko camp. We were forced to go and sleep rough in Victoria Park in Athens because it was too dangerous in the camp. In Islam, if you convert to Christianity they believe they must kill you.”

Most respondents reported that it was not safe to read their bibles in the camps. They expressed fear of being followed to church, and felt they had to be constantly on their guard, and had to lie about where they were going or had been in order to protect themselves.

“I am afraid to read my bible. The other refugees say if anyone is not Muslim then they are not human and we must kill them.”

“I don’t let anyone know I am a Christian. It is not safe. It is not even safe to read my bible.”

“We have to hide the fact we are Christians. It is not safe.”

“If one Afghani found out that we are Christian, they will kill us. I am afraid. 50% of the refugees here are Afghan – they are all connected to each other – if they find out that we are Christian, they will all know and we are not safe here.”

“In the camp there is no freedom to read the bible – we have to do it in secret. We feel very unsafe in the camp, because we are Christian.”

4.4 Perpetrators

Many of the threats and attacks directed towards the Christians interviewed in this survey, were perpetrated by Afghan Muslim migrants both inside and outside of the camps. The reason for this appears to be two-fold. Firstly, the current migrant population seems to be comprised of a high

percentage of Afghans. A large number of these seem to adhere to extremist ideologies and thus echo the sorts of attitudes seen by Daesh, the Taliban and other Islamist groups. In fact, some testimonies obtained in this study reported that many of the Afghan migrants claimed to be Daesh sympathisers, or even openly claiming to be Daesh themselves. Since there is much evidence that the actions of Daesh in Iraq and Syria are being targeted towards Christians, it is not surprising that this is then also being reflected in the camps. Secondly, the hostility towards the Christians in this sample is in part due to their Iranian ethnicity. There are long-standing tensions between Afghans and Iranians, and this seemed to be additional justification for the attacks experienced.

Perpetrators were not exclusively Afghan however. The Christians almost as frequently reported attacks and threats from other Muslim ethnicities including Arabs, Iraqis, Syrians, Moroccans, Kurds, Pakistanis and Libyans. The targeting of the Christian refugees is clearly beyond historical, ethnic conflicts. The primary reason for their targeting is their religion, compounded by their ethnicity.

Recommendations

It is erroneous and irresponsible to believe that it is appropriate for migrants of all religions and ethnicities to be housed together, and that they will co-exist harmoniously. Indeed, in an ideal world, this would happen, however the reality is quite different. There is a serious and pressing need to segregate within the migrant population. Forcing historical ethnic enemies to live together is a recipe for war within the camps. Add to that the religious hatred and targeting of minority religious groups within that pressure cooker, and it is only a matter of time before the situation becomes far worse.

It is clear from this survey that a separate 'hospitality centre' for Christian migrants is immediately needed in Athens. As the summer approaches and conditions deteriorate with the hot weather, it is expected that the vulnerability of the Christian minority will considerably increase. The frequency and severity of attacks is likely to increase, particularly in light of the fact that with the borders now closed in the north, the number of migrants stuck in Greece is likely to increase too. Indeed since returning from Greece, we are already receiving reports of the situation escalating and the Christian migrants with whom we have contact are in a state of panic.

It is generally understood that several aid agencies, including the UK government's DFID, do not provide aid or financial support to NGOs or projects that focus on Christian minority issues, for fear of appearing discriminatory. It is the recommendation of this report that such policies be challenged, on the basis that by holding to these policies, they are actively neglecting their duty to protect the human rights of *all* people. When a specific people group is at an increased risk of human rights violations compared with others, special considerations and actions do need to be made. If this sub-section of 'all people' is being excluded, then 'all people' are not being protected, particularly where that sub-section is specifically at risk. This must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Conclusions

Whilst there is a need to extend the survey, it is clear from this sample that it is absolutely necessary to consider and acknowledge the specific vulnerabilities of minority groups, within the broader migrant population. Given that the acts perpetrated against Christians across the Middle East by Islamist groups, such as Daesh, constitute serious human rights violations, and even war crimes/genocide, the vulnerabilities of this targeted minority group must be given serious consideration. There is clear evidence that the Christian minority is being specifically targeted and threatened within the refugee camps, and that current policies/strategies are vastly inadequate and do not provide sufficient protection for vulnerable minority groups. This is an issue that affects Christian migrants wherever they are in close proximity to the broader migrant population. As such, we cannot urge strongly enough the need for swift action to be taken, in terms of accommodating for this within humanitarian aid and human rights protection policies regarding the migrants.

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