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Lesvos: Asylum interviews to resume

Approximately 160 EASO personnel assisting in ensuring that asylum procedures are not disrupted. Agency also supporting establishment of emergency reception facility.

The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) confirms that its personnel will be resuming interviews for international protection on Lesvos in the coming days. Interviews were temporarily suspended following large fires which destroyed the Moria reception facility on 8 and 9 September 2020.

Other elements of EASO's operational activities on Lesvos, such as the drafting of Opinions, as well as Relocation workflows, were unaffected by the fires and continued without disruption.

Together with the European Commission and other EU actors, EASO has been in constant contact with the Greek authorities to offer any assistance possible, including ensuring that applicants for international protection are able to continue their procedures.

EASO also confirms that, contrary to some speculation, the destruction of EASO's facilities in Moria did not result in the loss of documents relating to applications for international protection. All such documents are not stored by EASO, and in any case are done so electronically. Furthermore, interviews carried out by EASO personnel did not take place in Moria, but rather at EASO's dedicated premises in Pagani.

EASO, which has approximately 160 personnel deployed in Lesvos, including caseworkers, registration assistants and reception assistants, has also re-deployed personnel to assist the Greek authorities with the ongoing establishment of an emergency reception facility in Kara Tepe. The Agency also stands ready to engage in the establishment of a new reception facility built to EU standards.

The Agency is fully engaged with the Greek authorities, as well as the European Commission, in addressing not only the immediate needs in Lesvos, but also in terms of finding long term solutions in line with European legal obligations and best practices.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address: press@easo.europa.eu

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