

**Jean Lambert MEP
Caroline Lucas MEP**

Commissioner Barrot
Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
Bruxelles 1048
Belgique

7th December 2009

Dear Commissioner Barrot,

We are writing to you with considerable concern following a recent delegation visit of Green MEPs to Calais. The purpose of the visit was to get an overview of the situation facing migrants and asylum seekers who are gathered around the port following the destruction of the so called 'jungle camp' at the end of September 2009.

The overwhelming impression received during the visit was one of a distinct lack of responsibility being taken by the French authorities for even the most basic welfare requirements of the people gathered in and around Calais, the majority of whom are from Afghanistan. Through meetings with the individuals concerned and also with NGOs active in assisting the migrants and asylum seekers it appeared clear that the ineffective management of the situation in Calais is in clear contravention of a number of EU asylum directives.

As you are well aware, Council Directive 2003/9/EC 'laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers' includes provisions related to the provision of information for those seeking asylum, access to education for minors, access to material reception conditions, and special provisions for unaccompanied minors. Furthermore, Council Directive 2005/85/EC 'on minimum standards on procedures in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status' includes provisions laying down 'guarantees for unaccompanied minors' and states that applicants for asylum *"shall be informed in a language which they may reasonably be supposed to understand of the procedure to be followed and of their rights and obligations during the procedure"*. Council Directive 2004/83/EC 'on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals or stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and the content of the protection granted' includes provisions relating to social welfare, access to accommodation and access to integration facilities.

The delegation encountered young men and a number of unaccompanied minors sleeping on the streets and surviving on food handouts from local NGOs. Whilst some of the people had not claimed asylum in France, (although hopefully the presence of the UNHCR will now ensure that this is a possibility), the delegation was astounded to discover that individuals who had been awarded refugee status and who showed the delegation their papers clearly stating this in French, which the individuals could not understand, were still sleeping on the streets and

appeared to have very little information or guidance on their rights or the next step in the procedure

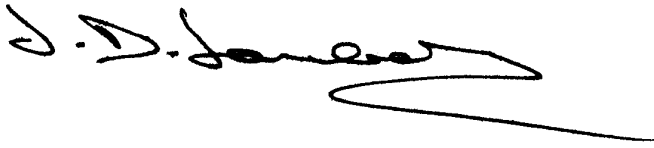
We would like to bring to your urgent attention the absolute failure of the French authorities to constructively engage with this challenge and look for durable solutions for those concerned and to highlight the apparent unwillingness of the French authorities to put in place even the most basic facilities to ensure the welfare and human dignity of those concerned.

We are acutely aware of the challenges for local and national authorities involved in managing situations such as the one in and around Calais. However the treatment of migrants and asylum seekers which the delegation witnessed recently in Calais lacks basic humanity, and in clear contravention of the EU asylum directives mentioned above.

Being aware of your deep personal concern for the effective implementation of the asylum acquis we would be very grateful if you could inform us as to what steps are being taken by the Commission to ensure that relevant EU legislation is being properly implemented in France, specifically in relation to the current situation in Calais.

We look forward to hearing from you

Yours sincerely



Jean Lambert MEP



Caroline Lucas MEP