



FLASH REPORT

Date:	19 October 2010
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Title:	Incident of racist violence against migrants in the city of Athens
Country:	Greece
Context	
Issue at stake:	Violent attack against foreign migrants and Muslims reveals racial/ ethnic and religious discrimination
Ground of discrimination:	religion/belief, race/ethnic origin
Source:	political development
Field:	Ethnic -racist violence
Legislative provisions:	Article 187 of Penal Code (formation of criminal group of constant structure and action), Article 308 of Penal Code (physical injury), Law 927/79 (interdiction of racial discrimination) as amended by Law 1419/84 (sanctions against racial & religious discrimination) and by Law 2910/01 (ex officio prosecution), Article 79 of Penal Code (judicial designation of penalty) as amended by Law 3719/2008 (aggravation of penalty due to racist motive)

Content :

Political development: Unknown individuals were the perpetrators of an incident of racist violence that took place on 16 October 2010 in Athens. In particular, a group of angry Greek nationals attacked a mini market owned by a foreigner from Bangladesh and caused physical injuries to the Imam of a non licenced Mosque of the area of Attiki Square in Athens, and to one more migrant. The conflict was soon spread around, and several Greek citizens and migrants appeared to be wounded. As migrants tried to escape from the anger of the attacking group they entered in an apartment under the basement of a residence building, which is being used as a non licenced Mosque. The members of the racist group blocked the entrance of the building and they started throwing woods and stones through the windows

and, as a result, five migrants were wounded. Outside the entrance many residents were harassing the migrants, who tried to fight back by throwing pieces of garbages to them. After a while, it seemed that around 80 persons were beating up foreigners in the surrounding neighbourhoods of Attiki Square. Although police forces arrived at the place of the conflict, it finally took more than 8 hours for the riots to stop.

Short analysis: Both Attiki Square and Ayios Panteleimonas, working class neighbourhoods with numerous immigrant families, have become since 2008 the target for racist attacks, which several human rights groups condemned. Racist attacks in these areas of the city have been escalating for some time.

In 2009 there had been an organised demonstration of - so called – “concerned citizens” against immigrants and the situation has been deteriorating ever since. Anti – immigrant and anti-refugee sentiment has been growing for years now. Attacks against foreigners and clashes have created a critical environment of social unrest that also affects the local population. It is characteristic that on September 2010 the UN High Commissioner for Refugees urged Greece to address spiralling racial violence against migrants after an Afghan employee of the Greek wing of “Medecins du Monde” got beaten up and left unconscious by a group of 20 persons carrying iron bars. He also singled out specific neighbourhoods of Athens where attacks are on the rise whereas he expressed deep concern over the increase in incidents that tend to turn fuel social tension. The UNHCR has called on the Greek authorities to take the necessary steps to investigate racial incidents as well as to prevent and deter similar events in the future.

Internet link source and additional information:

<http://www.alfavita.gr/artro.php?id=12113>

<http://www.syn.gr/gr/keimeno.php?id=20649>

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=36018&Cr=asylum&Cr1=>