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H.E. Ursula von der Leyen
President, European Commission

H.E. Magnus Brunner
Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration, European Commission

Subject: The unresolved investigation into the 11 April 2023 Lesvos “life-raft” incident documented by The New York Times

Dear President von der Leyen,
Dear Commissioner Brunner,

I write regarding video evidence published by *The New York Times*¹ documenting a sequence of acts on **11 April 2023** on Lesvos that, taken together, constitute **kidnapping and unlawful deportation by state actors or with state assistance**. As shown, **masked men** using **unmarked vehicles**, aided by the **police**, abduct asylum seekers; the abducted persons are then **delivered to the Hellenic Coast Guard** and **abandoned at sea** on a **non-navigable life raft**.¹ Such conduct is incompatible with the most basic requirements of European Union law and the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union**

Following publication, the Commission – through the then Home Affairs Commissioner **Ylva Johansson** – formally requested that Greece ensure the incident be **“fully and independently investigated,”**² and the Greek Prime Minister **Kyriakos Mitsotakis** stated that the matter was under investigation.^{2 3}

Now, nearly **three years** later, there is still no publicly credible outcome: no transparent findings, no visible accountability, and – critically – **I have still not been interviewed** as a key witness with direct knowledge relevant to this case.

This case also sits within a documented pattern in which deportation allegations in Greece repeatedly fail to result in prosecution or accountability³.

¹ The New York Times, Matina Stevis-Gridneff, Sarah Kerr, Kassie Bracken, and Nimet Kirac, “Greece Says It Doesn’t Ditch Migrants at Sea. It Was Caught in the Act,” May 19, 2023

² European Parliament, “E-001651/2023: Answer given by Ms Ylva Johansson on behalf of the European Commission,” August 9, 2023

³ Greek Council for Refugees; Hellenic League for Human Rights; HIAS Greece; Homo Digitalis; Refugee Support Aegean; Reporters United; Solomon; and Vouliwatch, *Struggle for Accountability: The State of the Rule of Law in Greece*, January 2025

In that context, I respectfully request your written answers to these questions:

1. **How long is this investigation expected to continue** before producing a reasoned outcome – and what timeline does the Commission consider compatible with the rule of law in a Member State?
2. **Has Greece reported interim findings** (written or oral) to the Commission regarding this specific case? If yes, **on which dates and with what substance** – and **why has no public summary** been released, given the gravity and public interest?
3. **What weight can the Commission attach to an investigation** that, after almost three years, has **not interviewed the principal witness** who provided the video evidence?
4. Given the video documentation and reported identifiability of those involved, **why has no one been charged or brought to trial** for conduct amounting to kidnapping and illegal deportation?
5. Does the Commission accept that the current situation has the appearance of **intentional delay until scrutiny fades** – and if not, **what concrete steps has the Commission taken since 2023** to prevent precisely that outcome?
6. Finally, **how can an egregious breach of fundamental rights and EU obligations** – captured on video – remain without effective legal consequence in an EU Member State for almost three years?

I await your **substantive written reply addressing each question.**

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Al' or similar, written in a cursive style.