

**Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikos Dendias' intervention at the
International Donors' Conference in Solidarity with
Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants (17.06.2021)**

«Distinguished Minister of International Development of Canada,
Ms Karina Gould,

Distinguished High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Filippo
Grandi,

Joint UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) and IOM
(International Organization for Migration) Special Representative for
Venezuelan refugees and migrants, Mr. Eduardo Stein,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate, for the second time,
to the International Donors' Conference for the Venezuelan
refugees and migrants.

And thank you to Canada, the UNHCR and the IOM for hosting
this important event.

I want from the outset to reiterate Greece's deepest concern over
the deteriorating political, economic, and social situation in
Venezuela.

A situation that now amounts to the greatest humanitarian crisis
the Latin American region has ever experienced.

Indeed, a growing number of the people of Venezuela continue to
be confronted with serious challenges. Such as:

- severe restrictions to their political, economic, social &
educational rights,
- inadequate access to food and water supplies,

- & limited access to proper medical care.

This already devastating situation has been further exacerbated due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

These realities have unavoidably led to the massive migration of Venezuelan citizens to neighboring countries.

A trend that has reached disconcerting dimensions.

And as is usually the case, the crisis is particularly affecting the most vulnerable groups of the population.

Including the women and girls of Venezuela who are struggling to make their voices heard.

Increasingly marginalized, it is not by chance that women and girls now constitute the majority of displaced persons.

It is obvious that, today, more than ever, we must continue to work even more closely together.

We must do everything we can to prevent the crisis from further deteriorating into a human catastrophe.

It is imperative that we show support and solidarity to all host states and communities.

I want to salute the decision of the Government of Colombia to offer Venezuelan migrants a Temporary Protection Status.

This is a courageous and remarkable step, expected to alleviate some of the suffering for those Venezuelans that have fled to Colombia.

Greece is a country greatly affected by vast migration flows from a different part of the world, hosting a disproportionately large number of migrants and refugees itself.

We therefore know all too well the complexities of the issue.

In this context and in contributing to the international efforts to increase coordinated assistance for the Venezuelan migrants and refugees, Greece would like to hereby offer, again this year, a symbolic amount.

Increased financial and technical support, as well as a stronger engagement by all is indeed needed.

However, it is also important not to lose sight of the fact that, in order to achieve a lasting resolution of the issue, it is imperative to address its root causes.

Thank you.»