



THE MAYOR OF ATHENS

November 18, 2016
Ref no.: 367012

Ms. Hilde Schramm
Initiative Respect for Greece
Paul-Krause-7 A
14129 Berlin, Germany

Dear Ms Schramm,

I am writing this letter in order to thank you for your initiative "Respect for Greece" and the kind invitation extended to Vice - Mayor Ms. Maria Iliopoulou as well as other members of the City of Athens administration to travel to Berlin in order to participate in the program "*Working with refugees in Athens and Berlin - Examples of Good Practice*", co-organized on 21 - 25/11/2016 by your initiative and the Bildungswerk Berlin of the Heinrich-Böll Foundation.

As the handling of the multiple implications of the refugee flows is at the top of my political agenda, I am certain that this program will make a valuable contribution to the exchange of relevant information, experience and best practices between Athens and Berlin and especially with regards to local level initiatives.

Furthermore, I would like to praise your interest and efforts to establish a closer and official cooperation agreement between Athens and Berlin.

During the past few years, the City of Athens has persisted in the enhancement of its international presence and role through its participation in international city networks, as well as through forming close bilateral cooperation agreements.

For us, a sister city relation is - and must be - a long-term procedure of continuous and integrated collaboration with substantial follow-up as well as concrete goals based on mutual interests and with the active involvement of the relevant city stakeholders.

We are really glad to recognize the cooperation we have recently developed with Berlin in the framework of the Partnership on Migration of the EU Urban Agenda as well as the Solidarity Cities initiative on the refugee issue that was recently launched in Athens. We see Berlin as a strategic partner and we wish to continue building up on this initial base in the long-term.

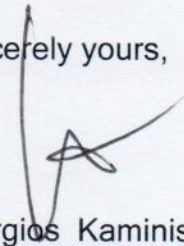
In view of the above, we would be willing to further deepen our existing relationship with Berlin on the refugee issues as well as exploring new areas of cooperation between our two cities.

I am confident that the participation of Vice - Mayor Iliopoulou in the Berlin seminar will present a good opportunity to define more concretely the fields of potential collaboration between our two cities on mutually interesting issues. Of course, in this direction the support of the active stakeholders from the civic society is not only expected but also warmly invited to be strong and decisive.

I would like to thank you once again for your contribution and interest in the development of the friendly relations between Athens and Berlin.

With my esteem and best regards.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Georgios Kaminis', written over a vertical line that extends from the 'Sincerely yours,' text.

Georgios Kaminis