



**FUNDACIÓ
FCBARCELONA**

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FANTASTIC WELCOME FOR THE FCB FOUNDATION AND THE BARÇA PLAYERS' ASSOCIATION ON LESBOS ISLAND (GREECE)

The FC Barcelona Players' Association has visited the Kara Tepe refugee camp and will play a match against a team of Greek ex-footballers this evening

The FC Barcelona Foundation and the Barça Players' Association visited the Kara Tepe refugee camp on Lesbos in Greece on Thursday morning. They arrived in the country on Wednesday to help promote social integration among young refugees.

The first activity they took part in was a sports clinic for 250 children, which aimed to provide a fun activity for the young from both the camp and the local Greek community. The event demonstrated football's role as a powerful tool to promote social cohesion in communities.

There are currently 700 refugees living at the Kara Tepe camp who crossed the Mediterranean from Turkey and who mainly come from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Kara Tepe is a reception camp with various educational and sports projects which go to great lengths to respect the dignity of the large numbers of families, children and disabled children who live there.

Juliano Belletti, José Edmilson and Aloísio Pires were the most recognisable faces among a group of fifteen ex-players taking part in the sports session with the children.

The Director of the Barça Players' Association, Luis Ortiz de Zevallos, and Mària Vallès, the General Director of the FC Barcelona Foundation, led the expedition.

This evening, the ex-Barça players will play a charity match at the Mitilene Stadium, in the island's capital, against a team made up of Greek ex-footballers. Most of the opposition side played in their national team for their famous European Championship victory of 2004.

The FC Barcelona Foundation's recent actions are another attempt to empower young people, between eight and eighteen-years-old from both the local and refugee communities, towards more positive relationships and social skills, and improved emotional well-being. Our future projects in this area will be possible thanks to a grant by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

The FCB Foundation's strategic aim to fight social exclusion means it is looking at developing its 'FutbolNet' methodology across various camps in the Mediterranean. The goal is to work on conflict resolution among children and young people through football as a means of dialogue. This project will also offer the essential psychosocial support needed to help build their futures.

MÀRIA VALLÈS' STATEMENTS

"The solidarity with the refugees on Lesbos island is admirable and is an example for the rest of the world. The FC Barcelona Foundation will contribute, with this visit and future programmes, to strengthening the ties between the refugee community and the local one and will help boys and girls overcome the traumatic circumstances they have suffered from. We want them to know their lives matter."