



PRESS RELEASE

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VISA D'OR AWARDED TO AFP PHOTOGRAPHER ARIS MESSINIS

AFP PHOTOGRAPHER ARIS MESSINIS HAS RECEIVED THE VISA D'OR FOR NEWS AT THE 28TH INTERNATIONAL *VISA POUR L'IMAGE* PHOTO FESTIVAL IN PERPIGNAN FOR [HIS COVERAGE](#) OF MIGRANTS LANDING ON THE BEACHES OF LESBOS.

Refugees risk their lives crossing the Aegean Sea in makeshift boats. Piles of abandoned life jackets bear witness to the flow of migrants arriving at the gates of Europe in the hope of finding a better life.

“What is the most shocking in this coverage is that you constantly realize that you're not in a warzone. That you're working in a place where there is peace, but the human pain is the same as in a war”, Messinis said, adding that he hoped by continuing to show these images something will change.

Aris Messinis's coverages in Libya and Egypt have won many awards, from Fotoweeek 2011, Days Japan 2012 and the National Press Photographers Association. He also received the [Bayeux-Calvados war photographers' prize](#) for his coverage of the battle of Syrte in Libya in 2011.

“Our photographer Aris Messinis has produced remarkable work on the migrants with this powerful, moving and disturbing series of images”, said AFP chairman Emmanuel Hoog. “This Visa d'Or is also recognition for the work done by all of the AFP teams who have covered the migrant crisis in Europe and the Middle East.”

A self-taught photographer, Aris Messinis was born in Greece in 1977. He began his career in 1997 as a stringer with Associated Press after leaving school and completing his military service. He joined AFP in 2003 and became photo manager for Greece in 2006.

With a network of 500 photographers who regularly receive top international prizes, AFP transmits more than 3,000 images a day and is recognised for the quality of its photo service. AFP's image bank is enriched by more than 50 partners and now offers some 39 million images. The international photo service, created in 1985, has increased its output sevenfold since 2000.

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