

Strasbourg
11/02/2026

Dear Ilia Lazarov,

I have just been informed by journalist Katerina Kalenteridou about the issue of the waters coming from Bulgaria, which from time to time create problems in the Regional Unit of Evros. Indeed, the Greek Prime Minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, has also taken an interest in this matter. Following the above, I would like to inform you as follows:

According to recent reports and announcements by the local authorities, heavy rainfall in Bulgaria and the overflow of rivers and reservoirs – including dams such as Ivaylovgrad – have led to a significant rise in water levels in the Evros and Arda rivers.

In particular, at the Pythio bridge the river level reached 6.50 meters, exceeding the alert threshold of 5.80 meters, resulting in a “red” alert being issued by the competent services. The municipalities of Didymoteicho, Orestiada, and Soufli are on heightened alert, while controlled releases through the opening of sluice gates have been carried out to relieve pressure on the embankments and prevent extensive flooding.

At the same time, a large volume of water is also being directed toward southern Evros, making the coming hours and days particularly critical for the safety of local communities, agricultural land, and regional infrastructure. Preventive evacuation measures have already been taken in vulnerable areas, and instructions have been issued to citizens to avoid movement near riverbanks.

It is evident that this is a quintessential cross-border water management issue, which requires timely coordination, full transparency, and enhanced cooperation between the competent authorities of our two countries.

Within the framework of our shared political family in the European People’s Party, as well as the European principle of good neighbourliness and cross-border solidarity, I would like to ask you to mediate with the Bulgarian Government and the competent services to:

- Ensure timely notification of the Greek authorities prior to any significant release of water from dams and reservoirs.
- Strengthen coordination in the management of water flows during periods of severe weather phenomena.
- Decompress dams in Bulgaria through controlled releases, where possible, in order to reduce the volume of water reaching Greece.
- Establish an updated agreement between our two States to ensure cooperation and an adequate and safe volume of water flowing into Greece.

I believe that with goodwill and coordination we can effectively protect citizens on both sides of the border.

I remain at your disposal for immediate communication and a possible joint parliamentary initiative.

With esteem and collegial regards,

George Aftias
Member of the European Parliament
European People’s Party

