Merkel’s Turkey Visit Aims to Soothe Tensions on EU-Migrant Deal

anka-Ankara/ Berlin – German Chancellor Angela Merkel will use her visit to Turkey this weekend to try to soothe tensions over a deal that has stemmed the flow of migrants to Europe, as Ankara and Brussels face growing accusations and long-term challenges to the deal.

The pact, which came into force almost three weeks ago, aims to help and induce an arrival of migrants and refugees on the islands, mainly from Syria, Turkey and Africa. More than a million reached Europe last year, including from the Mediterranean islands and Africa.

The talks, which will be held over a two-day period, will be a chance for Ankara and Brussels to discuss the implementation of the deal and address concerns that it has not fully gone into effect.

Greece, which has been the main entry point for migrants seeking a better life in Europe, is facing the brunt of the crisis, with thousands of migrants stranded on the island of Lesbos.

European Commission Vice President Frans Timmermans, who met with Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras earlier this week, said that the EU was ready to provide additional funding to Greece to help deal with the crisis.

The situation in Greece is “very serious” and “the government is very concerned about the situation,” Timmermans said.

The deal, which is expected to cap the migrant flow at about 14,000 per month, has come under criticism from both sides, with Ankara and Brussels blaming each other for not implementing it fully.

Merkel, who is expected to visit Turkey on Wednesday, is also expected to discuss the implementation of the deal with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The talks will take place after a meeting with Erdogan and will be held in the context of the ongoing crisis in the Mediterranean region.

The deal, which was agreed upon last October, calls for Ankara to take back migrants who have applied for asylum in Greece, while the European Union will resettle an equal number of migrants in the EU.

However, the talks are likely to be difficult, with both sides accusing each other of not implementing the deal properly.

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The talks are also expected to include discussions on the situation in Syria and the EU-Turkey Union. The EU-Turkey Union is a complex framework that aims to build a smooth and stable migration and asylum system.

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