Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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02 July 2008

Prohibiting the marketing and use of the "Mosquito" youth dispersal device

Motion for a recommendation
tabled by Mr Daniel DUCARME and other members of the Assembly

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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"Mosquito", a youth dispersal device, is currently being marketed in Europe. The unit is designed to discourage loitering by undesirable adolescents by emitting high-frequency sounds which only young people under the age of 25 are able to hear. The "Mosquito" device emits ultrasonic tones which are unpleasant to the ears of 90% of children under the age of 12. It would appear to be audible to 90% of individuals under the age of 22. The sounds emitted can cause headaches, sometimes severe.

Today, there is considerable opposition to this system which is deemed to stigmatise young people and to pose a danger to their health.

The problems of juvenile delinquency and the security of our fellow citizens should not be left in the hands of inventors of protection systems, nor should such problems give rise to the marketing of unregulated products.

A society's vitality depends on the opportunities given to its young generation to grow and develop in safety and in a healthy environment. No action or provision in this area should be contrary to the provisions of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and in particular Article 3 relating to the prohibition of torture.

In point of fact, it has been clearly established that the use of the "Mosquito" device produces a sensation of discomfort and pain. Furthermore, the system has not been subject to any scientific studies regarding its effects on health, particularly among vulnerable sections of the population.

In view of the international commitment to children's rights, including:

– the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly Article 3 on safety and health;

– the European Commission's undertaking to make children's rights one of its priorities, as underlined in its communication on the strategic objectives for 2005-09, in which it stipulated that "particular priority must be effective protection of the rights of children";

– the written declaration of the European Parliament of 7 May 2008 on a ban on the marketing and use of the antiteen "Mosquito" device.

The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the governments of member states:

– ban the marketing and use of the "Mosquito" device;

– order a health impact study of the "Mosquito" device;

– inform consumers of the conclusions of this impact study.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
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