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Child pornography and Internet-related sexual exploitation of children: combating new forms of sexual violence

Motion for a recommendation

tabled by Ms Marlene RUPPRECHT and other members of the Assembly

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

Information and communication technologies (ICT), and in particular the Internet, have generated new forms of sexual abuse and exploitation of children, particularly involving child pornography and “grooming” (solicitation for sexual purposes) of children through the Internet. The latter has facilitated the dissemination of child pornography products, stimulating the demand and leading to the development of thousands of websites world-wide, the vast majority of which are of a commercial nature. The increasing use of Internet chatrooms by people of all ages also gives potential offenders the opportunity to abuse children or engage them in an online abusive relationship without revealing their identity.

The Parliamentary Assembly is worried by the increase in these appalling crimes in recent years and the lack of effective countermeasures. Given that offences committed through ICT mostly take place in a very private context, national political action should notably involve awareness-raising measures addressing children, families and professionals in charge of children. Efficient prevention strategies should, amongst others, be aimed at fully informing children, empowering them to refuse sexual solicitations and at setting clear limits for the use they make of ICT, and notably the Internet. As some of the phenomena are relatively recent, a reinforced exchange of good practice amongst member states at Council of Europe level could be a useful tool.

The Assembly therefore urges member states of the Council of Europe to fight child pornography and Internet-related sexual exploitation of children through committed legislative and political action. It invites them to sign and ratify, if they have not yet done so, and rigorously implement the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (“Lanzarote Convention”) and the Convention on Cybercrime, which represent a clear and comprehensive reference in this respect.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democrat Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
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