Recommendation 1065 (1987)[1]

Traffic in children and other forms of child exploitation

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering that children have the right to be brought up in a secure and humane way, and that society has an obligation to protect them and look after their interests ;

2. Appalled by the international trade in children for such purposes as prostitution, pornography, slavery, illegal adoption, etc. ;

3. Referring to its Recommendation 1044 (1986) on international crime, in which it recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the governments of member states to co-operate in a study of and action against the trade in children ;

4. Considering that children have the same right as all human beings to enjoy an environment which affords them security, health and physical integrity, and that they must be treated humanely, that society has a duty to provide them with protection, to monitor observance of their rights and to afford them equality of opportunity ;

5. Bearing in mind its Recommendation 874 (1979) on a European Charter on the Rights of the Child, covering a number of aspects ranging from legal status to medical and social protection ;

6. Considering that it is essential that member states, as a matter of urgency, take the following measures :

a. sign and ratify, insofar as they have not yet done so, the following conventions :

   1. the Convention for the suppression of the traffic in persons and the exploitation of the prostitution of others (United Nations Treaty Series No. 1342, opened for signature at Lake Success, New York, on 21 March 1950) ;

   2. the European Convention on the Adoption of Children (1967) ;

   3. the Hague Convention on jurisdiction, applicable law and recognition of decrees relating to adoption ;

   4. Convention No. 138 of the International Labour Organisation, on the minimum age for employment ;

   5. the European Social Charter, with particular reference to Article 7 concerning the right of children and adolescents to protection ;

b. support in the United Nations General Assembly the draft declaration on social and legal principles relating to the protection and welfare of children, with special reference to foster placement and adoption, nationally and internationally ;

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1. Assembly debate on 6 October 1987 (15th Sitting) (see Doc. 5777, report of the Legal Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 5 October 1987 (12th Sitting).

c. seek safeguards and improve all practices in the case of international adoptions, inter alia :

1. by the elaboration of a code of conduct and guidelines for individuals and agencies proposing to undertake the interstate movement of unaccompanied minors ;

2. by regulating that, in interstate adoption, placements should be made through competent authorities or agencies, with the application of safeguards and standards equivalent to those existing in respect of national adoption ;

3. by regulating that in no case should the placement result in improper financial gain for those involved ;

d. promote and encourage a wide-ranging campaign of public information concerning the sale of and traffic in children, and the exploitation of child labour ;

e. inform educators and youth of the rights of the child, and incorporate human rights education in school curricula at all levels ;

f. promote the undertaking of judicious research programmes at national and international levels to analyse the forms, conditions and structures of the sale and traffic of children ;

g. enact strict laws and regulations to combat child pornography and harmonise member states' relevant legislation ;

h. promote and pursue a policy directed at meeting the needs of abandoned and street children ;

i. condemn any policy of commercial and industrial competition based on exploitation of child labour, and ensure that the activities of national and international agencies working in the field of development are designed in such a way as to have a positive effect on the rights and interests of children throughout the world ;

j. take measures to guarantee children working in conformity with Article 7 of the European Social Charter decent living and working conditions ;

k. increase public surveillance of such children, for instance by improving the labour inspectorate, appointing ombudsmen to protect their rights, providing for education and training in the workplace, and introducing additional welfare measures concerning their health and diet,

7. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers instruct the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) to study the traffic in children and other forms of exploitation of children as a priority matter in the light of the proposals made above.