Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 1179 (1992)[1]

Exodus of Albanian nationals

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Albania's forty years of isolation from the rest of the world, combined with its disastrous economic, social and political situation, have had traumatic effects on its citizens.

2. Since mid-1990, several hundreds of thousands of Albanians, although their knowledge of other countries was based solely on what they had heard or seen on foreign television, left Albania in search of better economic conditions abroad. Those who did not succeed in finding employment have returned voluntarily or have been repatriated.

3. For Albania, this exodus, mainly of young people and unaccompanied children, constitutes a tremendous loss.

4. The Assembly welcomes the Committee of Ministers' decision to open a special account ‘‘Emergency aid for Albania" to alleviate the acute hardship suffered by the Albanian population.

5. However, the events which took place in Italy have proved the need for stronger European co-operation in solving the problems caused by the mass exodus of asylum-seekers.

6. Therefore, while recognising that the Italian authorities, in August 1991, acted for the best in a real situation of necessity, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

6.1. take all such measures as are needed to enable Albania to become a stabilising factor in the Balkan region ;

6.2. consider ways and means of helping the Albanian authorities in initiating a process of economic and social development that will encourage Albanians to remain in their country ;

6.3. take the necessary measures to co-ordinate and improve European assistance to Albania ;

6.4. co-operate with the Albanian authorities and the international humanitarian organisations concerned in implementing programmes aimed at informing Albanians better of the prevailing economic and social situation in neighbouring countries ;

6.5. invite the governments of member states :

a. to contribute generously to the special account ‘‘Emergency aid for Albania" ;

b. to make use of the Council of Europe Social Development Fund to finance programmes providing professional training for Albanian nationals in the host countries and facilitating their voluntary return to Albania ;

c. to support the activities of international humanitarian organisations in Albania ;

6.6. invite the governments of member states directly concerned by the arrival of Albanians :

a. to provide these people with adequate assistance and define their legal situation ;

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1. Assembly debate on 5 February 1992 (23rd Sitting) (seeDoc. 6555, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, Rapporteur : Mr Böhm). Text adopted by the Assembly on 5 February 1992 (23rd Sitting).

b. to submit schemes to the Council of Europe Social Development Fund which will help to meet the needs of the Albanians living within their borders at the present time ;

c. to establish, in close co-operation with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), programmes of voluntary return.