



## Resolution 1327 (2003)<sup>1</sup>

### So-called “honour crimes”

#### Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly is very concerned by the increase in so-called “honour crimes”, committed against women in the name of honour, which constitute a flagrant violation of human rights based on archaic, unjust cultures and traditions.
2. The Assembly recalls the European Convention on Human Rights, which safeguards the right to life and the right not to be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
3. It also refers to its Recommendations 1450 (2000) and 1582 (2002) concerning violence against women in Europe which condemn all “honour crimes”, and to [Resolution 1247 \(2001\)](#) on, more specifically, female genital mutilation, and which stresses the importance and urgency of making a distinction between the need to protect minority cultures and turning a blind eye to unacceptable customs that amount to torture and/or a breach of human rights.
4. The Assembly notes that whilst so-called “honour crimes” emanate from cultural and not religious roots and are perpetrated worldwide (mainly in patriarchal societies or communities), the majority of reported cases in Europe have been amongst Muslim or migrant Muslim communities (although Islam itself does not support the death penalty for honour-related misconduct).
5. The Assembly welcomes the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Resolution on Working towards the Elimination of Crimes against Women Committed in the Name of Honour, which invites the international community to support the efforts of all countries, at their request, aimed at strengthening institutional capacity for preventing crimes against women committed in the name of honour and in addressing their root causes.
6. The Assembly also recalls the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women and its Optional Protocol, which make the state responsible for failures to implement the provisions of the convention concerning the ill-treatment of women, including crimes committed in the name of honour. It appeals to member states of the Council of Europe to ratify the convention and especially its optional protocol.
7. The Assembly notes that some states use case-law as a tool to defend so-called “honour crimes”, and deplores inaction in the countries where they are justified by the traditions and customs of minorities.
8. The Assembly is concerned by the insufficiency of adequate data recording the occurrence of so-called “honour crimes” and the policies of some states, which do not disclose such information. It considers that member states of the Council of Europe should make public all information relevant to these crimes, in order to facilitate the efforts to combat such forms of violence and increase awareness of their occurrence.
9. The Assembly welcomes the measures taken by some European countries aimed at the prevention and elimination of so-called “honour crimes”, including amendments to national legislation and granting residence permits or even asylum status to women who have been subjected to such crimes.

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1. Assembly debate on 4 April 2003 (16th Sitting) (see [Doc. 9720](#), report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, rapporteur: Mrs Cryer; and [Doc. 9770](#), opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, rapporteur: Mrs Wohlwend). Text adopted by the Assembly on 4 April 2003 (16th Sitting).



10. Therefore the Assembly calls on the member states of the Council of Europe to:

*adopt the following legal measures regarding the prevention and prosecution of so-called "honour crimes":*

- a. *amend national asylum and immigration law in order to ensure that immigration policy acknowledges that a woman has the right to a residence permit, or even to asylum, in order to escape from "honour crimes", and does not risk deportation or removal if there is, or has been, any actual threat of a so-called "honour crime";*
- b. *enforce the legislation more effectively to penalise all crimes committed in the name of honour and ensure that allegations of violence and abuse are treated as serious criminal complaints;*
- c. *ensure that such crimes are effectively (and sensitively) investigated and prosecuted. The courts should not accept honour in mitigation, or as a justifiable motive, of the crime;*
- d. *take the necessary measures to implement the laws related to these crimes and to give policy makers, the police and the judiciary a better understanding of the causes and consequences of such crimes;*
- e. *ensure a stronger female presence within the judicial bodies and the police;*

*adopt the following preventive measures:*

- a. *launch national awareness-raising campaigns through the media, in schools, universities and religious institutions in order to discourage and prevent "honour crimes";*
- b. *provide special educational programmes for women and men from communities where such crimes occur, to raise their awareness of women's rights;*
- c. *ensure that all children are made aware of gender equality from an early age;*
- d. *encourage the collation and dissemination of statistical information on the occurrence of so-called "honour crimes";*
- e. *provide gender equality training to law enforcement and judicial personnel to enable them to address complaints of violence in the name of honour with impartiality;*

*adopt the following protective measures:*

- a. *provide support for the victims and potential victims of attempted so-called "honour crimes" who request asylum;*
- b. *provide support for the victims and potential victims of attempted so-called "honour crimes", including personal protection, legal aid and psychological rehabilitation;*
- c. *create conditions for people to report such crimes in a safe and confidential environment;*
- d. *support NGOs and women's associations which combat these practices and provide a safe refuge.*