Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 1494 (2006)[1]

Stop trafficking in women before the FIFA World Cup

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly is very concerned about the announcement made by certain NGOs who predict that between 30 000 and 60 000 women and young girls may fall victim to trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation during the FIFA World Cup, which will take place in Germany between 9 June and 9 July 2006.

2. The Assembly considers it important to avoid confusing the concepts of trafficking, prostitution and immigration, which must be dealt with separately and appropriately. It reiterates that trafficking in human beings is defined in international conventions as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

3. It must be remembered that trafficking constitutes a violation of human rights and an intolerable infringement of the dignity of its victims. The Assembly strongly condemns this practice, which consists of treating human beings as objects, and calls for the protection of the victims of trafficking.

4. The Assembly reiterates its firm intention to eradicate this scourge, as reflected in the text of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197). It therefore welcomes the adoption, on 3 May 2005, of this convention which sets out measures for the prevention of trafficking, the protection of victims and the prosecution of traffickers. In particular, it points out that the convention provides for a recovery and reflection period of thirty days and measures to assist the victims of trafficking.

5. However, it notes that to date only 26 member states of the Council of Europe have signed the convention and no state has ratified it. It deeply regrets the fact that the European Community has not acceded to it either.

6. It is delighted that FIFA supports various humanitarian causes, such as the protection of the rights of children and the fight against racism. In its capacity as World Cup organiser, FIFA must also assume its responsibility to condemn the exploitation of women, which sometimes, highly regrettably, accompanies the holding of sports events, and therefore to denounce any activities that threaten human rights.

7. With the World Cup imminent, and given the acute nature of the problem of trafficking, men and women politicians alike, as well as sports organisations, must immediately take all the necessary measures to prevent trafficking and to protect its victims. In order to achieve this, the Assembly favours a non-discriminatory and humane approach, and therefore rules out any proposal to set up a temporary visa system applicable only to women.

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1. Assembly debate on 12 April 2006 (12th Sitting) (see Doc.10881, report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, rapporteur: Mrs Vermot-Mangold). Text adopted by the Assembly on 12 April 2006 (12th Sitting).

8. Consequently, it welcomes and supports the European Parliament's decision to promote the "Red card to forced prostitution" campaign run by the German National Council of Women and to ask the European Commission and the member states of the European Union to campaign throughout Europe so as to inform and educate the general public, and in particular football fans, about forced prostitution in the context of world sports events.

9. It backs the European Parliament's call for the states that will be affected by this problem, especially Germany, to set up a multilingual helpline to allow the victims of trafficking to request emergency assistance. The emergency phone number should be prominently displayed, with guidance in every language, in the various means of transport and on the various routes used by people who are travelling.

10. It urges the member states of the Council of Europe:

10.1. to sign, if they have not already done so, and ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings as soon as possible, so that it may come into force at the earliest opportunity and have the broadest possible impact; 10.2.

10.2. to implement without delay the main provisions of the convention, such as the victim identification process and the recovery and reflection period of thirty days for the benefit of victims, paying special attention to presumed victims who are in the process of being identified as such;

10.3. to help victims by setting up, for example, multilingual information, reception and assistance centres, and by ensuring that the police treat women victims of trafficking in human beings as victims, and not as illegal immigrants;

10.4. to consider the possibility of holding responsible those who use the services provided by victims of trafficking.

11. The Assembly calls upon the European Community to sign and ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings as soon as possible. It urges the European Commission to initiate without further delay the internal procedure making it possible for the European Community to sign and ratify this convention. It asks the Council of the European Union to take the decision to sign and ratify the convention.

12. It asks the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities to join the fight against trafficking in human beings. It calls on the municipal authorities of the World Cup host cities to denounce trafficking and to put in place multilingual information and reception units for victims.

13. It calls on FIFA to commit itself to a strong condemnation of trafficking in women, supporting for instance the Council of Europe's campaign to combat trafficking in human beings.

14. Finally, it encourages the media and professional footballers to condemn trafficking in women and to take part in the above-mentioned campaign.