Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 1926 (2013)[1]
Final version

Fighting "child sex tourism"

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, also referred to as "child sex tourism", is a violation of children's fundamental rights and dignity. Despite a growing awareness, child sex tourism has dramatically increased in recent years because of a booming travel and tourism industry, as well as abusive use of new technologies. Europe is concerned both as a sending and receiving region of "travelling sex offenders".

2. Council of Europe member States should protect children against all forms of sexual exploitation, both within their borders and beyond, and should not turn a blind eye when their nationals commit crimes and violate the fundamental rights of children, who are among the most vulnerable in our societies.

3. The Parliamentary Assembly therefore calls for committed legal action and policies to fight effectively against child sex tourism. Action taken should focus on prevention measures, prosecution of perpetrators, protection of victims and development of appropriate policies and international co-operation ("4 Ps" approach), both in the country of origin of travelling sex offenders and destination countries. This action should be co-ordinated and involve public, private and associative partners.

4. Further signature and ratification of international and regional standards in the field of protection of children against sexual exploitation is needed, as well as the strengthening of relevant national legislation by ensuring compliance with these standards and their effective implementation. Considering the transborder nature of child sex tourism, the police and the judiciary must co-operate closely at international level.

5. With a view to successful co-operation with the private sector, the tourism industry should be encouraged to adhere to sustainable and ethical tourism practices.

6. The Assembly therefore calls on the Council of Europe member States:

6.1. as concerns legal action to be taken, to:

6.1.1. sign and ratify international and regional standards in the field of protection of children against sexual exploitation, and in particular the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention, CETS No. 201), if they have not yet done so;

6.1.2. ensure that their domestic law complies with international and regional standards in the field of protection of children against sexual exploitation, in particular by:

6.1.2.1. protecting children up to the age of 18 from sexual exploitation, irrespective of the legal age of sexual consent;

6.1.2.2. providing for extraterritorial jurisdiction and abolishing the dual criminality rule for child sexual exploitation;

6.1.3. develop, implement and monitor mechanisms that will prevent high-risk sex offenders from travelling abroad;

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1. *Assembly debate* on 23 April 2013 (13th Sitting) (see Doc. 13152, report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Mr Ghiletchi). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 23 April 2013 (13th Sitting).

6.1.4. encourage, at both national and international level, charities, schools, orphanages and other institutions where the personnel are required to work with children, to systematically carry out pre-employment checks, including by requiring applicants to present their national criminal records;

6.2. as concerns policies to be applied, to:

6.2.1. actively promote sustainable and ethical tourism, respectful of children's rights, and encourage the tourism industry to adhere to sustainable and ethical tourism practices, by adopting self-regulation measures such as the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism and by systematic reporting of sexual exploitation of children;

6.2.2. raise awareness about child sex tourism, in close co-operation with all stakeholders concerned, namely public authorities, the private sector and non-governmental organisations, including through information campaigns to educate the public about the legal and social consequences of child sex tourism, and to encourage people to report travelling sex offenders, as well as to choose tourism professionals who are committed to combating child sex tourism;

6.2.3. increase international co-operation for the prosecution of travelling sex offenders, including by bilateral and multilateral agreements and establishing joint investigation teams;

6.2.4. establish a reliable and centralised database system allowing the exchange of national records on sex offenders and the collection of data on child sex tourism cases;

6.2.5. take a holistic approach and fight, in parallel, against all forms of sexual exploitation of children, including by preventing child abuse images on the Internet, which particularly fosters child sex tourism;

6.2.6. increase financial, logistic and technical support to all actors involved in combating child sex tourism in the destination countries, including by assisting them in raising the awareness of children and local communities of the issue of sexual exploitation of children, as well as in developing:

6.2.6.1. education and alternative employment opportunities for vulnerable children and child victims of sex tourism;

6.2.6.2. training programmes for all professionals who are likely to come into contact with or care for child victims of sexual tourism, with a view to enabling them to identify potential abuse and to react to it in an appropriate manner.

7. The Assembly also invites national governments and parliaments and any other public or private organisation concerned to join, support and contribute to the Council of Europe ONE in FIVE Campaign to Stop Sexual Violence against Children.