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

Doc. 13938
08 January 2016

Protecting victims of natural disasters

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Ms Brigitte ALLAIN and other members of the Assembly

Climate changes ahead may well dramatically increase the number of "*environmentally displaced people".* This could affect 200 million people in 2050! Some territories could even disappear under the effect of rising water levels. This will threaten respect for fundamental rights and lead to ever greater pressure on natural resources, mounting tensions, and even armed conflicts. The issue requires that the entire international community address it. Debates are under way at the IPCC and under the *Nansen Initiative*. The Cancun Agreements of 2010 called in particular for the *"adoption of measures to enhance understanding, coordination and cooperation with regard to climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation, where appropriate, at the national, regional and international levels."* The World Bank has recently emphasised that climate change represents a grave threat to development.

At the time of COP 21, it is essential to go further. Today, for instance there is no legal instrument ensuring global and effective protection for environmentally displaced people. In line with its past action regarding various essential issues, for example the combating of counterfeit medicines, the Parliamentary Assembly could engage in an in-depth debate on this matter and pave the way for subsequent preparation by the Committee of Ministers of a Convention on this issue which would guarantee the rights of these refugees who, like political refugees, are entitled to protection. This legal instrument would be all the more appropriate as such a Convention could be open to signature by all the States wishing to be parties to it, yet without requiring consensus at the Council of Europe. This work would complete and deepen the report on "Forced migration: a new challenge" (rapporteur: Philippe Bies).

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left