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The plight of children who do not have any civil status documents

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Ms Catherine QUÉRÉ and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Today, hundreds of millions of children (60 million a year worldwide, according to Unicef's data) do not have any civil status documents and therefore lack identity, which has led to their being called ghost children. As underscored by Robert Badinter, "such a child is thus condemned to ignorance, misery and social rejection. [...] This outrage requires a real mobilisation of States and citizens worldwide."

This dramatic phenomenon concerns primarily Africa (3% of unregistered children in Somalia, 7% in Ethiopia, 14% in Zambia, etc.), but it also affects Europe. In France, it is reported to concern approximately 4,000 children, Roma children and separated minors. A Unicef study stated that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Serbia and in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", 2 to 4% of Roma children are not registered at the civil registry authorities. Given its consequences, this serious problem deserves to be better understood in order to prevent it. Such a phenomenon is particularly unacceptable in Europe.

The rise in the number of refugees fleeing wars in their homelands can moreover increase the number of separated minors in Europe without any civil status documents.

The Parliamentary Assembly should therefore draft a report on this issue so as to identify potential avenues for future action, in liaison with the competent international organisations, especially Unicef.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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