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Drug policy and human rights in Europe: a baseline study

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Ms Thorhildur Sunna ÆVARSDÓTTIR and other members of the Assembly

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

For years, global drug policy has evolved to put ever more emphasis on a human rights based approach to a policy issue facing every nation. Indeed, the United Nations General Assembly has agreed that “countering the world drug problem” must be carried out “in full conformity” with human rights.

Council of Europe member States and institutions have been leading voices in this development. In advance of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the world drug problem in 2016, the Parliamentary Assembly Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development issued a statement raising concerns about the human rights dimensions of drug policy, seeking a shift from punitive models to public health. Human rights have also been one of three thematic focus areas for the Pompidou Group since 2014 and, in November 2017, the permanent correspondents issued a landmark statement reaffirming the need to bring human rights into “drug policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation”.

However, moving from commitments to policy and practice is not an easy task and the situation on the ground is unclear. The Pompidou Group recognised, in fact, that it is “not possible at present to give an authoritative and comprehensive view on the human rights dimension of drug policy”. The Group therefore urged member States to conduct a comprehensive human rights-based review in their country.

The Assembly should therefore draft a report, initiating the development of a new, measurable, indicators framework for human rights in drug policy. Furthermore, based on this indicators framework, the report should provide a baseline overview of the human rights situation in relation to drug policy in Council of Europe member States.

Signed (see overleaf)



Signed¹:

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1. EC: European Conservatives Group
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group