Recommendation 1115 (1989)[1]

Transfrontier movements of toxic waste

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having taken note of the report on the World Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, presented by its Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities (Doc. 6114) ;

2. Convinced that the exporting of hazardous wastes to Third World countries is injurious to the environment and to humanity, and a frequent cause of political tensions ;

3. Noting that the industrialised countries are increasingly committed as regards the problem of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes ;

4. Noting the action taken in this sphere by numerous international organisations and in particular the involvement of the United Nations Environment Programme ;

5. Welcoming the fact that, less than two years after the initiative taken by the United Nations Environment Programme, a world convention aimed at preventing, regulating and solving the problem was concluded in Basle on 22 March 1989 ;

6. Considering that the convention will clarify a field of activities which is very inadequately known and often involves unlawful trafficking ;

7. Convinced that such an instrument can foster awareness and ensure monitoring of movements of large quantities of dangerous wastes ;

8. Realising nevertheless that certain major problems, such as movements of radioactive waste, liability of exporting countries and compensation for damage, were not taken into consideration ;

9. Convinced that, notwithstanding the aforementioned shortcomings, the signing and ratification of the convention by all Council of Europe member states would constitute a guarantee and also a first step towards the regulation of movements of wastes ;

10. Regretting some African countries' reservations concerning this convention, the signature of which is consequently delayed ;

11. Considering it in keeping with the Council of Europe's role to pay close attention to the problem of the environment and hence to that of transfrontier movements of hazardous wastes ;

12. Commending the work currently being performed within the Council of Europe by the Committee of experts on compensation for damage caused to the environment,

1. Assembly debate on 28 September 1989 (20th Sitting) (see Doc. 6114, report of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, Rapporteur : Mr Ruffy). Text adopted by the Assembly on 28 September 1989 (20th Sitting).

13. 13. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

a. invite Council of Europe member states to ratify and implement without delay the World Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal ;

b. invite the member states to provide incentive for the establishment of a North-South information network on hazardous wastes, in order to ensure worldwide transfer of information on wastes for the protection of the Southern and Northern countries alike ;

c. continue the intergovernmental activities on the study of compensation for damage caused, inter alia, by transfrontier movements and disposal of hazardous wastes with a view to producing a legislative instrument to be adopted as early as possible.