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Removal of children from immigrant families in Norway

Written declaration No. 589

This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

More information has recently come to light about children being taken from immigrant families in Norway due to inadequate child care, after acknowledging that preventive measures have failed and that the child's biological parents do not have the necessary skills and capacity to ensure the child's safety and to meet the child's needs. We regret that, as regards short-term care, the biological family and close relatives are not given priority. Parents or relatives face problems in obtaining information from the Norwegian authorities about their children.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child requires that States Parties respect the right of the child to preserve his/her identity, including nationality, name and family relations. Due regard should be paid to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

As globalisation increases, nationals of different States experience cultural differences, and different child-rearing principles cause misunderstandings. Therefore, it is necessary to implement international agreements which would allow the exchange of information about the child and emphasise co-operation with the competent authorities of the child's State of origin. These principles are enshrined in the 1996 Hague Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Co-operation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children.

We call on the Norwegian Parliament to ratify the Hague Convention as soon as possible.

Signed (see overleaf)



Signed¹:

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BĒRZINŠ Andris, Latvia, ALDE
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Total = 23

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