

Press Release

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Child abuse in institutions: more far-reaching measures to grant justice to victims

Strasbourg, 06.09.2010 – In adopting a report on child abuse in institutions, the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) called today for "more far-reaching measures in the future when it comes to according full justice to victims of past offences". The Committee believes that "more committed action will be required" when it comes to reinforcing legislation on child abuse and applying it to various institutional contexts.

The report, drafted by Marlene Rupprecht (Germany, SOC), expresses concern at the "lack of committed action" sometimes been observed when it comes to dealing with offences against minors. It recommends that European governments ensure legislative protection by providing for the *ex-officio* prosecution in cases of child abuse in any context, defining as illegal and excluding certain practices with regard to the punishment of minors in institutions which are contrary to their dignity and rights.

The Committee also calls for reinforcing rules and modalities for the external supervision of various institutions, notably ensuring that institutions are never run and supervised by the same authority. It also advocates the setting up of neutral and independent bodies that children can turn to whenever they fear become victims or witness abuse in their institutions.

The adopted text calls on the Council of Europe member states to sign and ratify the Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and invites public authorities and national parliaments to join the Council of Europe's campaign to stop sexual violence against children, which will be launched in Rome on 29 and 30 November 2010.

The Committee expressed its wish that the report be debated by the Assembly at its next plenary session (Strasbourg, 4-8 October 2010).

[Draft recommendation](#)

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 member states.

President: Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (Turkey, EDG) – Secretary General of the Assembly: Mateo Sorinas.

Political groups: EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party); SOC (Socialist Group); EDG (European Democrat Group); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe); UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).