Human rights in the world: Union's activities from 1997 to June 1999. Memorandum and annual report

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Cecilia MALMSTRÖM (ELDR, S) on human rights in the world. The report called for a strategic approach in the EU's human rights policy and also highlighted the problem of discrimination and violence against women all over the world. The rapporteur felt that ending systematic discrimination should be a major priority for the coming years. She argued that today's fragmented EU human rights policy needed to be replaced by a common and coherent strategy for human rights with better cooperation between the institutions. The report's other key recommendations included the establishment of an advisory group with representation from the EU institutions, EU Member States and human rights experts to discuss the strategic aspects of human rights activities, the development by the EU of its own indicators to measure respect for human rights, a special European Parliament envoy for prisoners of conscience, and an EU human rights website. The report condemned "violence by tradition", such as gender-apartheid in Afghanistan, as well as so-called "honour killings". It also addressed the issues of domestic violence, trafficking and genital mutilation and called for the right to asylum for women who were subject to systematic discrimination and violence. The report also included recommendations on issues such as the death penalty, freedom of the press and the internet, religious persecution and torture.