Measures to protect minors in the European Union

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Children also have something to say and can take decisions so adults should not always express views on their behalf. This was the view expressed by Wilmya ZIMMERMANN (PES, D) after the adoption of her own-initiative report on the protection of minors by the Committee (chaired by Carlo CASINI, EPP, I). Protection of the rights of minors should be a fundamental principle of the new Treaty of European Union. Council is urged to waste no time in converting into third pillar joint actions the 'political agreement' - reached in Dublin on 26 September 1996 at the informal meeting of the Council of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers - on the principle of improved judicial cooperation in combating paedophilia Council and Member States were asked to set up a missing children's centre modelled on the body that operates in the United States. Minors should be considered as citizens and thus as having rights such as the right to belong to democratically run organizations and associations. Political participation by children is to be encouraged, especially by means of youth councils and parliaments at various levels. Children who have a nationality other than that of a Member State should be entitled to freedom of movement. Unaccompanied refugee children from a third country should be able to enter the territory of a Member State to be reunited with their families. A children's ombudsman on the Norwegian model should be appointed. The Commission is asked to combat sex tourism and to set up a directorate-general with responsibility for children's rights.