# Freedom, security and justice: standing of victims in criminal procedures. Framework Decision. Initiative Portugal

2000/0813(CNS) - 23/11/2000

The committee adopted the report by Carmen CERDEIRA MORTERERO (PES, E) amending the proposal under the consultation procedure. It wanted to ensure that victims of crime had easy access to the judicial system so that they could receive treatment corresponding as closely as possible to their particular situation. It called for particular attention to be paid to groups which were especially vulnerable owing to their age, gender or other reasons and urged the Member States to ensure that their authorities should question victims only on such matters as were strictly necessary for the proper conduct of the penal procedure. The rights and needs of children who were victims of crime should be taken into particular account. The committee also wanted information to be available to victims in all the Community languages so that they could be provided with full information even where a crime was committed outside their usual country of residence. Victims should be able to find out details of all ways and means open to them to defend their rights and interests. In addition, compensation for any damage suffered should if possible be paid by the perpetrator of the crime. The committee also wanted Member States to take steps to ensure that, in cases where victims might be at risk, they were informed of the release of the person arrested or sentenced for the crime against them and of any other circumstance which might give cause for concern. Similarly, it wanted to ensure that victims were not obliged to confront offenders in the premises where legal proceedings took place. Lastly, it wanted to delete the provision whereby victims could testify by means of video recordings (as opposed to video conferencing), arguing that the right of the accused to a fair trial included the right to put questions directly to witnesses for the prosecution.