Area of freedom, security and justice: compensation to crime victims. Green Paper

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The committee adopted the report by Roberta ANGELILLI (UEN, I) on the Commission's Green Paper. It recommended that all EU Member States should establish minimum state compensation schemes for victims of crime who cannot obtain compensation from the offender or through other means, while adding that the existence of such schemes should not prevent Member States from maintaining or introducing more generous rules. Particular attention should be paid to victims of terrorism. The committee added that state compensation to victims should also be available to third-country nationals legally residing in a Member State. The report also called for lists of injuries for which compensation is to be awarded to be drawn up and said that not only direct victims but also indirect victims (for example, dependants or relatives of the direct victim) should be eligible for compensation. The committee felt that minimum standards should include a common definition of immaterial damages such as pain and suffering. It advocated creating a European Fund whose task would be to guarantee the payment of compensation to crime victims in accordance with the Community criteria, and also called for a European victim support freephone line to be set up to provide victims with information on the right to state compensation. In addition, the Commission was urged to carry out a comparative study to pinpoint the best practices in the Member States. Lastly, those Member States that had not yet done so were called upon to ratify the European Convention on the Compensation of Victims of Violent Crimes.