Criminal law: European network of national contact points for crime victims. Initiative Belgium

2002/0821(CNS) - 19/03/2003

The committee adopted the report by Ewa KLAMT (EPP-ED, D) amending the Belgian initiative under the consultation procedure. It stressed that the network should be laid down by a binding legal instrument and also included a reference to Article 12 of the Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA, in force since 22 March 2002, which directly affects the matters covered by the initiative. The committee emphasised the role of mediation in criminal cases in a number of amendments and wanted the title of the Decision to be changed to reflect this. In addition, it proposed to set up a secretariat as a separate unit within the existing secretariat of the European Crime Prevention Network, and defined its tasks and responsibilities. The Commission should be responsible for the secretariat and its activities should be financed from the EU budget. The report also proposed that specialised measures of restorative justice be developed for migrant women, "in which due attention would be paid to their cultural background". Another amendment suggested that the Network should set up and maintain a website containing its regular reports and any other useful information, in particular a compilation of best practices. The committee also specified that the Member States should ensure that men and women are "appropriately represented" at the contact points. Lastly, it called on the Council to make an initial evaluation of the functioning of the network one year after the Decision's entry into force and, subsequently, to make a regular evaluation every three years.