# Trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation

1996/2258(COS) - 16/12/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Susan A. WADDINGTON (PSE, UK) on trafficking in women Parliament denounced this scourge and considered that it was indispensable for a task force to be set up in the Commission in order to implement the action points listed in the Commission communication. Parliament considered it of paramount importance that all Member States implemented in full the joint action adopted on 24 February 1997 on action to combat trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of children and to carry through into practice the commitments made at The Hague in April 1997 on trafficking in women. An active initiating and coordinating policy was needed on the basis, inter alia, of Articles 29 and 34 of the new Treaty of Amsterdam and a convention should be established providing for sanctions reflecting the seriousness of the offence of trafficking in human beings. Member States should also adopt a multidisciplinary approach and improve coordination with a view to combating trafficking in women. Bearing in mind that women from third countries were the primary (but not the only) victims of this scourge, Parliament considered that they should receive special support in terms of social, health and psychological care, emergency telephone lines, legal assistance, safe houses and temporary residence status and advice on their right of asylum. They should also be provided with information on the possibility of damage compensation. Parliament also underlined the prevention of trafficking in women and the adoption of penalties commensurate with the severity of the crime. Member States were called on to implement measures to apply the principle of extra-territoriality to individuals and organizations implicated in trafficking in women, to provide the possibility in law of active prosecution of these people and to make a punishable offence the taking away of travel documents against the will of the holder. The Commission should give priority to these actions in all its development aid programmes (countries of central and eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America, ACP countries and Mediterranean countries). In budgetary terms, the appropriations intended for action against this problem under the Stop programme should be increased and should be used for the detection and prosecution of traffickers. The funds should also be used for training, information to victims and prevention and reintegration of victims. Additional funding and a legal basis were also required for the Daphne programme concerning the sexual exploitation of children. Lastly, Parliament called for an increase in funds for Phare and Tacis in relation to the fight against trafficking in women. With regard to prevention, Parliament considered that all the Member States' embassies in third countries should provide information on the dangers of recruitment into the entertainment business targeted at women. Accompanying measures should also be planned for women from third countries who were victims of sexual exploitation in the Community and who returned to their country of origin. Coordinated information campaigns were required to inform women about the mechanisms and networks established in relation to trafficking in women. Lastly, Parliament called for greater powers for the EIS and Europol with regard to the fight against trafficking in women.