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PROPOSAL FOR A RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL

pursuant to Rule 114(1) of the Rules of Procedure

by Barbara Kudrycka

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on fighting trafficking in human beings – an integrated approach and proposals
for an action plan

European Parliament recommendation to the Council on fighting trafficking in human beings – an integrated approach and proposals for an action plan

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the EU and EC Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
 - having regard to the Commission Communication to the European Parliament and to the Council on fighting trafficking in human beings - an integrated approach and proposals for an action plan (COM(2005)0514),
 - having regard to Rule 114(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas trafficking of human beings violates the fundamental principle of human dignity which is the very foundation of the EU and of Member States' policy in protecting human rights,
- B. whereas the EU has already adopted measures to combat human smuggling and human trafficking according to the principles outlined in the protocols of the Palermo Convention and will take into account the principles recently established by the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings,
- C. whereas in 2004 the European Council recommended in the Hague Programme for strengthening freedom, security and justice that an EU plan be adopted 'with a view to the development of common standards, best practices and mechanisms to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings' (notes in section 1.7.1),
1. Addresses the following recommendations to the Council:

Recommendation 1: Human trafficking should be converted from a 'low risk – high reward enterprise for organised crime' into a high risk – low reward one. Law enforcement must use all the resources and capacity available to enforce the prohibition of human trafficking, to deprive it of any economic advantage and, where financial gain has been made, to seize and confiscate any assets. The investigation of human trafficking should be afforded the same priority as other areas of organised crime in that specialist investigative techniques and disruption strategies should be employed;

Recommendation 2: Member States should, where necessary, speed up the transposition of Directive 2004/81/EC and take into consideration the recently concluded Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings;

Recommendation 3: In judicial and police cooperation, Member States should ensure the

necessary organisational structures, specialised personnel and adequate financial resources for their law enforcement authorities to be able effectively to combat human trafficking. Member States should ensure that national law enforcement agencies regularly involve Europol in the exchange of information, in joint operations and joint investigative teams and use the potential of Eurojust to facilitate the prosecution of traffickers;

Recommendation 4: Member States and the Commission should strengthen political dialogue with third countries bilaterally and multilaterally on the human rights dimensions of anti-trafficking policies and continue to raise the issue in relevant regional and multilateral forums;

Recommendation 5: The EU recognises the importance of taking forward a human rights and victims-centred approach. Member States should ensure that the human rights of victims of trafficking are protected fully at all stages in the process, and that appropriate referral mechanisms are in place, as necessary and in line with national practice and law, to enable the early identification and referral of trafficked persons;

Recommendation 6: Regional solutions to prevent trafficking in human beings and to ensure the safe return and reintegration of victims are essential. Member States and the Commission should continue to promote regional initiatives that complement and inspire EU-wide cooperation (inter alia the Nordic Baltic Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings, the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative, the pan-European Budapest Process, the '5+5 dialogue' between the Western Mediterranean countries, the Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue and other forums/organisations);

2. Calls on its President to forward this recommendation to the Council and, for information, to the governments and parliaments of the Member States.