

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



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WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure

by Marielle De Sarnez and Bernard Lehideux

on recognition of the slave trade and slavery as a crime against humanity

Lapse date: 16.6.2005

15/2005

Written declaration on recognition of the slave trade and slavery as a crime against humanity

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the transatlantic and Indian ocean slave trades and the practice of slavery, which took place from the 15th century onwards in the Americas and Caribbean, the Indian Ocean and Europe and of which African, American Indian, Malagasy and Indian populations were the victims, are major tragedies which caused millions of deaths and the deportation of 25-30 million persons who were totally deprived of their rights and freedom,
- B. whereas this tragedy must remain engraved in the collective memory of mankind,
- C. whereas some Member States, such as France in 2001, have already recognised the slave trade and slavery as a crime against humanity, and whereas the 2001 Durban World Conference against slavery, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance stated that 'slavery and the slave trade are a crime against humanity',
- D. whereas the European Union should follow the lead given by these initiatives aimed at building a society based on tolerance,
- 1. Acknowledges that the transatlantic and Indian Ocean slave trades and the practice of slavery, which took place from the 15th century onwards in the Americas and Caribbean, the Indian Ocean and Europe and of which African, American Indian, Malagasy and Indian populations were the victims are a crime against humanity;
- 2. Calls on the Member States to incorporate into their own laws provisions similar to those adopted by France through its law of 21 May 2001 recognising the slave trade and slavery as a crime against humanity;
- 3. Calls on the Member States to incorporate the slave trade and slavery into their school curricula and introduce history and human sciences research programmes on this subject;
- 4. Calls on the European Union and the Member States to work, at international level, in particular within the Council of Europe and the United Nations, towards setting a common date to commemorate the abolition of the slave trade and slavery;
- 5. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Council, the Commission, the Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Council of Europe.