

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

3.12.2008

0103/2008

WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure

by Maria da Assunção Esteves, Jo Leinen, Gérard Deprez, Hélène Flautre and
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on the protection of human rights in closed institutions

Lapse date: 26.3.2009

Written declaration on the protection of human rights in closed institutions

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union; and Articles 1, 3, 24 and 25 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights,
 - having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas the ultimate objective of the European Union is to build a more human and fair world,
 - B. whereas closed institutions such as social care homes for elders and minors, prisons and other internment centres are away from the critical control of public opinion and therefore tend to be forgotten by political leaders,
 - C. whereas isolation and dependency of institutionalised people open the way for severe human rights violations which require a combative policy for human rights,
1. Calls on the Commission and the Council to coordinate measures and legislation aiming at better controlling the human rights situation in closed institutions:
 - the inspection of closed institutions should be conducted not only by official bodies, but also by groups of citizens coming from non-governmental organisations which are representative of civil society and are expressly authorised by law;
 - citizens who carry out inspections in closed institutions should have the power to enter them freely; their actions should correspond, to all legal effects, to the exercise of a legal duty;
 - citizens should report the conclusions of their inspections to the competent authorities of Member States, and they should be able to propose reforms or urgent measures;
 2. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Commission, the Council and the Governments of the Member States.