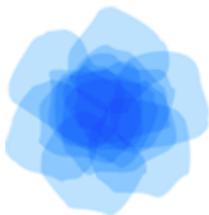


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Conclusions of Justice Ministers on «Child protection»

Date: 2007-10-02



The ministers of Justice, gathered in Lisbon, for Justice and Home Affairs informal council and trying to answer to the more serious and concrete problems of the European citizens, acknowledge the following:

- a) There is a strong political will, shown by ministers of Justice, which is determinant regarding child protection in Europe, where crimes do not respect the States borders;
- b) Quick and efficient cooperation between Member States, relevant national authorities, European Union bodies and agencies allows joint and coordinated prevention and fight against child abuse and there is the determination to work together;
- c) Civil society's, in particular ONGs, contribution towards child protection must be acknowledged and promoted;
- d) Crimes committed against children do not know any boundaries and are often fostered by internet;
- e) Promoting legislative solutions is not the only answer to the problem; it is imperative to adopt concrete measures at Community level leading to effective and immediate improvement of child protection, giving an additional role to mediation procedures;
- f) European Union should encourage the universal protection of children in its external relations.

The ministers of Justice suggest the following:

- 1) E-Justice portal should include a list of missing children, established and updated in cooperation with relevant national authorities;





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2) E-Justice portal should facilitate direct contact with central authorities in the scope of the Hague Convention of 1980 on civil aspects of international child abduction and with European Mediator whose role should be strengthened;

3) Setting up a flexible EU-wide child abduction alert, complementing cooperation between relevant national authorities. Based primarily in the media and oriented to people in general, its use should be limited to judiciously selected cases;

4) Crimes committed against children with the help of internet should be condemned and punished; the Commission is asked to present proposals for measures designed to improve prevention and the fight against those actions;

5) European and international legislative instruments to fight against cybercrime committed against minors, namely the ones associated to sexual exploitation (child pornography, child grooming) like the Council of Europe Conventions on Cybercrime and on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, should be ratified and enforced by Member States;

6) Implementation of cooperation mechanisms between different national authorities, in particular the 24/7 network set up by Framework Decision 2005/222/JHA, of 24 February 2005, on attacks against information systems that ensures cooperation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, should be operational and assessed;

7) Cooperation and exchange of pertinent information between relevant national authorities and Europol and Eurojust must be reinforced;

8) The promotion of children's rights and the international legislative framework for protection of children must constitute a priority in the context of JHA' external relations, namely with Union's neighbour countries.

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