Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Profiling of Roma and other asylum seekers from the Western Balkans

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Ms Annette GROTH and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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The European Union has granted visa liberalisation to Serbia, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Montenegro on 19 December 2009 and to Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina on 15 December 2010. Following these steps, some member States, including Belgium, Germany and Sweden, expressed concerns about the increase in the number of asylum seekers from these countries, mainly persons of Roma and Albanian ethnicity. European media and policy makers labelled them as economic "refugees" and pointed out the alleged "abuse" of the visa-free regime.

The European Commission and European Union member States requested the countries of the Western Balkans to take measures in order to prevent their citizens from leaving their countries and seeking asylum in the European Union as a condition to maintain visa liberalisation. The countries concerned accepted to introduce such measures that consist of enhanced border checks and profiling, including exit controls in line with the Schengen acquis.

The Parliamentary Assembly is concerned that some of these measures are incompatible with fundamental human rights principles such as embodied in the European Convention of Human Rights and other Council of Europe instruments. They are depriving citizens of the countries concerned both of their freedom of movement, including their right to leave their own country, and their right to seek asylum. Of particular concern is the fact that ethnic profiling and other measures are targeting primarily the members of ethnic minorities of whom Roma are the most affected.

Therefore, the Assembly should carry out an in depth analysis of the human rights implications of these measures that are being advocated and taken and make recommendations to avoid potential human rights violations.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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1. EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democrat Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group