0119/2016

21.11.2016

WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on missing refugee children

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Lapse date: 21.2.2017

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Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on missing refugee children[1]

1. According to Europol, there are an estimated 10 000 refugee children missing in Europe, and these children are being targeted by pan-European criminal gangs for sexual abuse and slavery.

2. There is currently a lack of a cohesive EU-wide policy or protocol for dealing with refugee children when they go missing.

3. There is a need to ensure that unaccompanied refugee minors are adequately protected in the EU, including by identifying unaccompanied children upon disembarkation, registering them, carrying out a preliminary risk assessment and ensuring referral to the relevant child protection services.

4. Cases of missing refugee children should also be treated with the utmost urgency and seriousness when they are reported to European authorities.

5. The Council and the Commission are urged to make missing refugee children a top priority of the European Union's migration and refugee policy, and to put a further emphasis on cooperation between Member States to combat criminal gangs that take advantage of these vulnerable children.

6. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Council and the Commission.

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[1] Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.

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