



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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INFORMATION NOTE

from : General Secretariat of the Council
to : Council
Subject : The Mosquito
- Position of the Belgian delegation

Delegations will find attached a position paper from the Belgian delegation on the above subject which has been put on the provisional agenda, under "other business", for the forthcoming Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting on 21 and 22 May 2008.

The Mosquito
Position of the Belgian delegation

The Mosquito is a device which emits annoying high-frequency sounds that only people up to the age of 25 are able to hear. The device is used to banish children and young people from public places and private facilities. Children and young people who have already been exposed to the Mosquito complain about ear pain, buzzing in their ears and headache.

The use of the Mosquito violates various human rights and the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 3, Article 2, and Article 19). The devices present an offence against a certain target group and contribute to bodily harm. Moreover, they stigmatise and discriminate a whole group of the population as they target ALL children and young people regardless of their behaviour or misbehaviour.

Children and young people are fully-fledged members of our society. Their development and integration appear among the key tasks within the frame of youth policies (at the European level). Youth policies therefore resort to various instruments, such as youth work, so as to allow and support the integration of every individual.

The use of the Mosquito thus raises the question of an appropriate approach. Would it not be better to pay more attention to our young people, to address them directly and to encourage them instead of laying violent hands on them and banish them?

The Ministers of Youth of the Flemish community, the French community and the German-speaking community of Belgium are extremely worried about current developments and the use of the Mosquito and other similar interfering transmitters. They consider the approach and procedure as unacceptable. Due to the increasing mobility of young people, a mobility supported with European funds, this issue is increasingly becoming a cross-border issue.

For that reason we would like to see a commitment to an integrative approach to youth policies at the European level and we would like to invite the European Commission to issue a statement on this matter. Moreover, we call on all competent authorities to take actions against the use of the Mosquito and other similar devices that violate human rights and to prevent and prohibit their use.

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