



THE REBECCA PROJECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Health Safety and Dignity for Vulnerable Families

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Rebecca Project for Human Rights Calls on the Council of Europe to Promptly Answer an Inquiry from the European People's Party into a "Serious Violation" of the Lanzarote Convention by the Netherlands

Italian Head of the EPP, Luca Volonte, Raises Concerns that Netherlands has violated its obligation to implement the Lanzarote Convention by refusing to initiate investigations into allegations of child abuse by former Dutch Justice Ministry Secretary-General Joris Demmink

WASHINGTON, DECEMBER 14, 2012 – Following a December 6 letter from European People's Party (EPP) MP Luca Volonte to the Council of Europe, inquiring into a "serious violation" of the Lanzarote Convention by the Netherlands, The Rebecca Project for Human Rights today called on the Council of Europe to promptly answer MP Volonte's concerns that the Netherlands has failed to initiate adequate investigations into allegations of child abuse by former Dutch Justice Ministry Secretary-General Joris Demmink. In MP Volonte's letter to the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers he asks if 1) Does it (Council of Europe) agree that the Netherlands has seriously violated its obligation to implement the Lanzarote Convention with the continuous refusal to initiate official inquiries into the numerous charges of child abuse against this senior Dutch official? Does it agree that this is scandalous, especially in view of the influential position of the accused person?; 2) Does it agree that an impartial investigation with international expertise must be conducted in this particular case?; and 3) Is it willing to ask the Dutch authorities to launch an impartial investigation with independent investigators from different countries? The full text of the letter is available at: <http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/XrefViewPDF.asp?FileID=19235&Language=EN>. The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers consists of Europe's 47 ministers of foreign affairs, and answers to MP Volonte's questions will be formulated by each country's ambassador to the Council of Europe.

The Rebecca Project for Human Rights Executive Director Imani Walker and Policy Director Kwame Fosu issued the following statement: "Italian MP Luca Volonte and the European People's Party should be commended for their efforts to launch a Council of Europe inquiry into a 'serious violation' of the Lanzarote Convention by the Netherlands for the Dutch government's failure to adequately investigate alleged pedophilia crimes committed by former Dutch Justice Minister Joris Demmink. Now is not the time for the Council of Europe to delay the inquiry from MP Volonte and the European People's Party. Demmink's alleged victims have waited far too long for justice. It is not uncommon for written questions to the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers to take up to six months for a formal response. Time is not on the side of victims of sexual abuse. Since the 1990s, Joris Demmink was allowed to remain in his post of prestige and power at the Dutch Justice Ministry. In October, he retired and was honored with a prestigious award for his service to the Dutch civil service. Now, he will enjoy the benefits of retirement and collect a generous

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pension and has an opportunity to travel the world and commit crimes against other underage boys. And what of Demmink's alleged victims? All they want is an impartial investigation and justice. The Council of Europe cannot delay and must investigate the reported violations of the Lanzarote Convention for the Dutch government's mishandling of the Demmink pedophilia investigation."

In his formal written question to the Council of Europe, European People's Party MP Luca Volonte writes 'despite an overwhelming number of primary witnesses,' claims of rape by Demmink against two minor Turkish boys "never led to an official criminal investigation as defined in the Dutch Code of Criminal Procedure." MP Volonte adds: "The Netherlands has signed and ratified the Lanzarote Convention which stipulates that victims shall be protected from intimidation and their accusations treated as priority and investigated even if the victim withdraws his or her statement."

During a October 4 U.S. Helsinki Commission Briefing – "Listening to Victims of Child Sex Trafficking" – Chairman and Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ), in reference to the accusations against Secretary-General Joris Demmink, stated "It is imperative that the justice system be ready to listen to allegations and to thoroughly investigate allegations no matter when they are raised – and no matter who is accused." According to a report on the briefing in the Catholic News Report, accusations of Demmink sexually abusing young boys in Turkey remain uninvestigated. The report stated: "The boys' lawyer, Adèle van der Plas, said that the criminal charges filed on behalf of these boys were never officially investigated, despite the availability of primary witnesses. One of the accusers has reportedly faced threats and abuse for coming forward with his story. Rather than investigate the matter, she said, the government accepted Demmink's claim that he was not in Turkey in the 1990s. While Turkish sources have evidence to suggest that this is not accurate, she said, 'there is considerable pressure exerted on the Turks by the Dutch not to reveal the truth.'" According to van der Plas' testimony before the U.S. Helsinki Commission, Dutch authorities also deterred criminal investigations into pedophile networks of influential Dutch customers at boy brothels.

For more information on the criminal complaints against Dutch Justice Ministry Secretary-General Joris Demmink, please visit www.ArrestDemmink.com. A transcript of the U.S. Helsinki Commission Briefing, Listening to Victims of Child Sex Trafficking, can be found here: <http://www.arrestdemmink.com/index.asp?idmenu=4&title=Latest%20News&idsubmenu=135#.UHUnyLSOW0s>. A video of the hearing may be viewed here: <http://www.arrestdemmink.com/index.asp?idmenu=5&title=Testimonial%20Videos&idsubmenu=138#.UHUoI7SOW0s>

The Rebecca Project for Human Rights (RPHR) is a transformational organization that advocates for justice, dignity, and reform for vulnerable women and girls in the United States and Africa. For more information, please visit: <http://www.rebeccaproject.org/index.php>

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