

JACQUES BARROT

*Vice-président de la Commission européenne*

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**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF MR OLLI REHN**

Currently, child abandonment continues to be a problem in Romania. According to UNICEF, 10 000 children a year are affected. Nevertheless, the Romanian Parliament has passed an Act, which came into force on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, forbidding international adoptions of children who do not have grand parents in a Member State of European Union. This text effectively prevents all international adoption.

The French Associations who care for Romanian children have met the new Prime Minister, who said he was willing to modify this text by order. However, he is still reluctant given the position of the Commission, particularly DG Enlargement, which seems to prohibit any kind of international adoption.

I think it would be more opportune to re-open this right to international adoption, subject to its compatibility with the Hague Convention, which has been ratified by Romania.


Today, the situation is dramatic for these children, as orphanages are closing and recruitment policy for nurses to care for the children is only improvised.

The Prime Minister asserts that he wants to fight against child abandonment, but he is convinced that it is also necessary to permit to place some abandoned children using international adoption.

Personally, I cannot believe that a solution compatible with European ethics is impossible. And it is inconceivable to maintain that the European Union has no interest in these children's future, on the pretext that it is a matter to be decided at National level.

Facilitating child traffic is not the objective, but simply to authorise international adoption, following the very strict rules settled by the Hague Convention.

I just wanted to warn you about this situation given the distressed situation of these children. I should be very grateful if you could take a careful look at the situation, and to offer to the Romanian Prime Minister the option of acting in a way he knows in his heart to be necessary for the protection of abandoned children.

  
Jacques BARROT