



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

T-ES(2018)17_en

28 June 2018

LANZAROTE COMMITTEE

Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe
Convention on the protection of children against sexual
exploitation and sexual abuse

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Declaration

**of the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe
Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual
Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention)**

**on protecting migrant and refugee children against sexual
exploitation and sexual abuse**

Adopted by the Lanzarote Committee on 28 June 2018

DECLARATION OF THE LANZAROTE COMMITTEE ON PROTECTING REFUGEE AND MIGRANT CHILDREN AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEXUAL ABUSE

1. *Recalling that in accordance with Article 1 of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention), the purposes of the Convention are to*
 - “a) prevent and combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children;*
 - b) protect the rights of child victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse;*
 - c) promote national and international cooperation against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse”;*
2. *Emphasising that human rights standards require states to protect and respect the rights and best interests of the child at all times, regardless of their migration status;*
3. *Drawing attention to the findings of its urgent monitoring round report on “Protecting children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse” as adopted on 3 March 2017;*
4. *Acknowledging that migrant and refugee children, in particular unaccompanied and separated children, are extremely vulnerable, and are thus in need of additional protection and care to safeguard their rights and best interests;*
5. *Conscious of the need to put in place comprehensive measures to ensure their protection against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and to provide appropriate support and assistance to child victims in their physical and psychosocial recovery;*
6. *Concerned by recent events related to the management of the arrival of migrant and refugee children in Council of Europe member and observer states,*

The Lanzarote Committee calls upon the States Parties to the Convention to:

1. uphold the rights and best interests of the child at all times, regardless of their migration status;
2. ensure that follow-up is given to the recommendations contained in its urgent monitoring round report on *“Protecting children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse”*;
3. take measures to address the specific risk of exposure to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of migrant and refugee children, taking into account the increased vulnerability caused by factors such as deprivation of liberty, family separation, inadequacy of reception and care and lack of effective guardianship systems;
4. cooperate with relevant stakeholders in Europe and beyond to:
 - prevent the exposure of migrant and refugee children to the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse;
 - provide appropriate support and assistance to child victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in their physical and psychosocial recovery;
 - fight against the impunity of sexual offenders.