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**THE COMMISSION PROPOSES A JOINT DECLARATION BY THREE
INSTITUTIONS AGAINST RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA (1)**

The Commission has put before the European Parliament and the Council a joint Declaration which forcefully condemns all forms of racism, xenophobia and discrimination.

The Declaration expresses the attitude of the three Community institutions towards demonstrations of intolerance shown to foreign workers on Community territory.

The Commission is concerned about the fact that, ignorance as regards the real situation of foreign workers and their contribution to the European economies and lack of familiarity with their lifestyle and culture can lead to intolerance and even rejection of the foreigner.

This danger arises particularly in times of crisis and in a difficult employment situation. The ideological, social and psychological aspects of racism and xenophobia stem from the fear that any different person or group presents a threat. Suppression alone therefore cannot eliminate demonstrations of racism. Efforts to inform and educate people concerning tolerance, respect for differences and appreciation of other cultures are just as important.

The responsibility of the Community, motivated by its ideals of freedom and peace, to reiterate its belief in the dignity of man, and launch an appeal to combat any action detrimental to that dignity, regardless of race, religion, nationality or ethnic origin. The Joint Declaration is intended as a moral and political undertaking by the Community institutions in the face of racism and xenophobia and every form of discrimination and calls for a vigorous information and education campaign.

(1) COM(85) 743.

The draft states that whereas respect for the dignity of man and the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination are part of the cultural and legal heritage of all the Member States and are enshrined in their national constitutions and legislation the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission,

"- vigorously condemn all forms of discrimination, defamation, racial theory or insult, expression of hate or violence in physical, spoken or written form directed against persons or groups of persons on the grounds of their origin, or their belonging or not to a particular ethnic group, nationality, race or religion,

- solemnly call on Member States to adopt the necessary measures to protect the identity and dignity of every member of society, regardless of race, religion, nationality or ethnic origin,

- recall the importance of disseminating balanced and accurate information to all citizens in response to the dangers of racism and xenophobia, and the need to ensure that all forms of discrimination are prevented or eliminated".

It is based on the Resolution for a Community policy on migration which the Council adopted on 16 July on a proposal from the Commission. It also fulfils an undertaking given on several occasions by Mr. Peter SUTHERLAND, Member of the Commission with special responsibility for social affairs. Commission member SUTHERLAND has moreover made the following statement on this subject:

"We have witnessed recently in Europe a disturbing growth of racist and xenophobic attitudes and actions - often directed against immigrant workers and their families. The adoption today by the Commission of a draft Joint Declaration on Racism and Xenophobia - intended to be solemnly adopted by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission in the near future - is a clear rejection of this trend, which we consider to be totally incompatible with the ideals and principles which inspire the European Community. The proposed Declaration will be a significant moral and political stand by the Institutions of the Community against racism and xenophobia as well as an expression of solidarity with all those who find themselves victims of discrimination and prejudice".