

African Union, African Regional Bodies

## Resolution on importation of dangerous products and toxic waste into Africa

Legislation as at 24 November 2006

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African Union

## Resolution on importation of dangerous products and toxic waste into Africa

Published on 24 November 2006

**Commenced**

*[This is the version of this document from 24 November 2006.]*

**CONSIDERING** the Basle Convention on the control of cross-border movement of dangerous waste and its elimination, as well as the prohibition of all exports of dangerous waste to third countries, adopted on 22 March 1989 and ratified by the majority of African States;

**CONSIDERING** the International Convention for the prevention of pollution by vessels, as amended by the relevant Protocol of 1978 (Marpol 73/78);

**CONSIDERING** the Lome IV and Bamako Conventions prohibiting the export of dangerous or toxic waste to ACP countries from the European Union;

**CONSIDERING** that nearly 600 tons of chemical waste were dumped in August 2006 in some districts of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, by a Russian vessel, the « Probo Koala » sailing under the Panamanian flag, chartered by Trafigura Becheer, a Dutch company;

**CONSIDERING** that eight persons died and about 85,000 persons were admitted to hospital for treatment against nose bleeding, diarrhoea, nausea, eye irritation and respiratory disorders; and that the dumping of toxic waste can have serious environmental consequences: soil contamination, surface and ground water pollution;

**CONSIDERING** that this intoxication seriously affected a large number of children: according to UNICEF estimates, between 9,000 and 23,000 children might need medical assistance, treatment and other sanitation measures in their living environments;

**CONSIDERING** that most African countries have no rigorous regulations protecting the environment and their populations' means of existence from the disastrous effects of dangerous waste;

**CONSIDERING** that Africa has become a dumping ground for all kinds of dangerous waste; that 80 sites for toxic waste from developed countries have been identified among others: scrap computers in Nigeria, radioactive containers in Somalia; etc.

**CONSIDERING** that the dumping of dangerous waste in Côte d'Ivoire is just the emerging tip of the iceberg represented by the transfer of large quantities of dangerous waste into Africa, which has become the dumping ground for multinational companies; in fact, Greenpeace has identified 80 sites as having received toxic waste from developed countries;

### **THE PANAFRICAN PARLIAMENT,**

1. **Expresses** its sympathy and solidarity with the people of Côte d'Ivoire in general and with the affected communities in particular and assures them of its support;
2. **Strongly condemns** the multinational companies and countries involved in the dumping of toxic waste in Africa in general and in Côte d'Ivoire in particular;
3. **Decides** to send a mission to Côte d'Ivoire to conduct, in Abidjan, on-the-spot enquiry into the impact created on the environment in general, on natural resources (water), and on human beings in particular;

4. **Requests** the PAP Standing Committee in charge of environmental issues to gather information on the illicit trafficking and dumping of such waste and dangerous products in African countries, and submit a report to the Plenary Assembly at its 7<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session. The report should particularly:
- (i) propose measures aimed at controlling and reducing, in the short term, and eradicating, in the medium term, the illicit trafficking, transportation and dumping of such products in African countries;
  - (ii) present the list of countries and multinational companies indulging in the illicit dumping of toxic waste and products in African countries.