



FLASH

Fraktion der Europäischen Volkspartei (Christdemokraten) und europäischer Demokraten im Europäischen Parlament
Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats in the European Parliament
Groupe du Parti Populaire Européen (Démocrates-Chrétiens) et Démocrates Européens au Parlement européen

Internet address: <http://www.epp-ed.org>
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Pressedienst - Press Office - Service de Presse

Brussels, 22 November 2007

Malcolm Harbour and Andreas Schwab (EPP-ED):

Progress in toy safety needs better implementation of controls

Malcolm Harbour MEP and Andreas Schwab MEP, EPP-ED-Coordinators in the Internal Market Committee have generally welcomed Commissioner Kuneva's initiative to improve toy safety in the European Union. **"We fully support the Commissioner in her efforts to highlight the need for better enforcement of the existing control mechanisms, given rising numbers of incidents involving dangerous substances, especially in imported toys. The analysis of the Rapid Alert System RAPEX, presented by the Commissioner today, proves that the controls are sufficient but must be followed up more effectively by Member States, particularly when it comes to removing dangerous toys from shelves without delay"**, Harbour said.

"Toy safety is a very sensitive matter for EU citizens in the context of general product safety. The Commissioner's initiative to review and evaluate existing control systems including toy imports has already borne fruit in the countries of origin such as China. However, priority should remain on the existing systems including national authorities instead of the establishment of new mechanisms", Schwab added. Both MEPs agreed that the main responsibility for product safety lies with the industry and must not be circumvented by simply outsourcing the production to third countries.

The Report also argues it is in the interest of the industry to enforce its internal control mechanisms with regard to protection of intellectual property and product know-how as part of the fight against fake products. "We share Mrs. Kuneva's view that European legislation in this respect is sufficient. But better enforcement is needed in this area as well to ensure European consumers are guaranteed safe products. The industry should therefore quickly remove all internal control deficits to make further legislation in this sector unnecessary", Harbour and Schwab concluded.

Note: According to the Commission, RAPEX notifications of dangerous products have reached an all-time high of 179 cases in October 2007. Almost 70 percent of the products registered there are of Chinese origin. At the same time, Chinese authorities have cancelled 750 export licenses for Chinese toys.

For further information:

Malcolm Harbour, MEP, tel.: +32 - 2 - 2847132

Andreas Schwab, MEP, tel.: +32 - 2 - 2847938

CDU/CSU-Gruppe in der EVP-ED-Fraktion im Europäischen Parlament
Knut Götz, M.A. / M.E.L.S., Tel.: +32 - 2 - 28 41341 oder +32 - 479 - 97 21 44 (GSM)
Thomas Bickl, M.A. Tel.: +32 - 2 - 28 32002 oder +32 - 478 - 21 53 72 (GSM)
Lasse Böhm, Tel.: +32 - 2 - 28 40774 oder +32 - 484 - 65 68 97 (GSM)
Rue Wiertz, B - 1047 Brüssel, Fax: +32 2 28 49044

EPP-ED-Press Service, Knut Goelz, tel.: +32 - 479 - 972144