



10/3/2013



Doc. 13325
03 October 2013

Creation of Embryos with Genetic Material from More than Two Progenitor Persons

Written declaration No. 557

This written declaration commits only those who have signed it

1. Considering that the modification of human eggs or of early embryos for procreation using heritable (germ-line) interventions through the use of genetic material external to the entirety of the two parents' hereditary information (their genomes) is a eugenic practice;
2. Considering that:
 - The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights indicates in Article 24 that "germ-line interventions' could be considered as practices which are 'contrary to human dignity";
 - The Council of Europe's Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine indicates in Article 13 that "an intervention seeking to modify the human genome may only be undertaken for preventive, diagnostic or therapeutic purposes and only if its aim is not to introduce any modification in the genome of any descendants".

This means, according to paragraph 91 of the explanatory report for Article 13, that:

- "Interventions seeking to introduce any modification in the genome of any descendants are prohibited. Consequently, in particular genetic modifications of spermatozoa or ova for fertilisation are not allowed";
- The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union indicates in Article 3 that "In the fields of medicine and biology (...) the prohibition of eugenic practices, in particular those aiming at the selection of persons, must be respected".

The undersigned members of the Parliamentary Assembly affirm that the creation of children with genetic material from more than two progenitor persons, as is being proposed by the United Kingdom Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, is incompatible with human dignity and international law.

Signed (see overleaf)