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02 February 2011

## Gender equality in South East Europe

### Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr José MENDES BOTA and other members of the Assembly

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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Women in South-East Europe face common challenges in the field of gender equality.

To a considerable extent, this can be explained in the light of the region's recent history.

The transition from socialism to democracy affected the position of women in society, being accompanied by a return to traditional values. In addition, the war contributed to the marginalisation of women from decision-making to the advantage of men, who were considered more decisive leaders.

The economic difficulties due to the transition to a market economic and the war led to cuts in the area of social protection, including health and child care. This had an impact on women's economic independence and limited their access to reproductive health and family planning.

Many women still suffer from the scars of the war, in particular the consequences of rapes and sexual violence which was used as a weapon against them and their communities.

Domestic violence – often unreported – and trafficking for sexual exploitation are serious problems.

Over the past years, countries from the region have taken a wide range of measures to improve the status of women. In order to support and encourage these efforts, the Parliamentary Assembly should study attentively the situation, in particular as regards:

- women's participation in public and political life;
- women's socio-economic empowerment;
- women's access to justice;
- violence against women;
- trafficking in human beings for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

The aim of the Assembly should be assessing progress, identifying shortcomings and making precise recommendations, to better assist these countries in achieving *de iure* and *de facto* gender equality.

*Signed (see overleaf)*



*Signed*<sup>1</sup>:

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BLANCO Delia, Spain, SOC  
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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe  
EDG: European Democrat Group  
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
SOC: Socialist Group