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Gender equality and the status of women in the Council of Europe southern neighbourhood

Motion for a recommendation
several Assembly members

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

Important changes are taking place in the immediate southern neighbourhood of the Council of Europe: while Libya is torn by a civil war, regime changes have occurred in Egypt and Tunisia, which have embarked on a path of democratic transition. In addition, a far-reaching reform process is being elaborated in Morocco.

Women were at the forefront of the street protests which ushered in the current process. This momentum should not be lost. In fact, the current democratisation process represents an invaluable opportunity to involve women in public and political life, to strengthen the legal and political framework to promote gender equality and to enhance the status of women in society and economic life, in countries where they have been often neglected.

The Council of Europe has an important role to play: it should assist countries in its immediate southern neighbourhood to develop and consolidate democratic institutions, respect human rights and secure the rule of law. In this context, gender equality and the status of women should be given special attention, as without equality between women and men, and their balanced participation in all aspects of life, it is not possible to establish sound foundations for a democracy.

In undertaking this task, the Council of Europe can rely on the consolidated experience of the North-South Centre and the Venice Commission and, in the context of interparliamentary co-operation, on the new status of Partner for democracy established by the Parliamentary Assembly.

The Assembly, therefore, should examine the situation of women and the state of gender equality in the countries of the southern shore of the Mediterranean, and make recommendations in this respect to the Committee of Ministers, which should be taken into account in the elaboration of the Council of Europe neighbourhood policy.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

BERGAMINI Deborah, Italy, EPP/CD
AYVA Lokman, Turkey, EPP/CD
BOCCHINO Italo, Italy, NR
BONDARENKO Olena, Ukraine, EPP/CD
CARLONI Anna Maria, Italy, SOC
CIRCENE Ingrida, Latvia, EPP/CD
DOZZO Gianpaolo, Italy, EDG
GALATI Giuseppe, Italy, EPP/CD
GARDETTO Jean-Charles, Monaco, EPP/CD
GAUTIER Gisèle, France, EPP/CD
MALGIERI Gennaro, Italy, EPP/CD
MENDES BOTA José, Portugal, EPP/CD
NIRENSTEIN Fiamma, Italy, EPP/CD
PAPADIMOULIS Dimitrios, Greece, UEL
PLOTNIKOV Oleksiy, Ukraine, SOC
RIGONI Andrea, Italy, ALDE
SAÏDI Fatiha, Belgium, SOC
STULIGROSZ Michał, Poland, EPP/CD
VITALI Luigi, Italy, EPP/CD
ZACCHERA Marco, Italy, EDG

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
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group