Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 1847 (2008)[1]

Combating violence against women: towards a Council of Europe convention

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Recalling its Resolution 1635 (2008) – Combating violence against women: towards a Council of Europe convention – the Parliamentary Assembly welcomes the Council of Europe Campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence. This campaign, conducted from 2006 to 2008, has involved all three political dimensions of the Council of Europe (parliamentary, governmental, local and regional) and associated NGOs.

2. The Assembly considers that the Council of Europe campaign "Stop domestic violence against women" has brought greater awareness of the phenomenon and acknowledgement of the fact that violence against women, particularly domestic violence, is an unacceptable violation of human rights.

3. Despite the progress made and the international instruments already in existence, the Assembly considers that action to combat violence against women must be intensified. It is convinced that the drafting of a legal instrument which embodies the "three Ps" (protection of victims, punishment of perpetrators and prevention) and specifically addressing the question of gender-based violence is necessary in order to encourage the member states to attain the minimum standards in this respect and strengthen their legislation. The Assembly feels that the preparation of a framework convention (modelled on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, ETS No. 157) would make it possible to propose guidelines and provisions defining objectives that the contracting parties would undertake to pursue through national legislation and appropriate governmental action.

4. The Assembly accordingly invites the Committee of Ministers to draft a framework convention on the severest and most widespread forms of violence against women, associating the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and NGOs in the drafting process, which should:

4.1. encompass the gender dimension and address the specific nature of gender-based violence;

4.2. cover the severest and most widespread forms of violence against women, in particular domestic violence against women (partners or former partners, cohabiting or not), sexual assaults (including rape and "marital rape") and harassment, forced marriages, so-called "honour crimes" and female genital mutilation;

4.3. include provisions requiring states to take the necessary measures to protect victims and prevent and prosecute acts of violence against women;

4.4. include an independent monitoring mechanism capable of controlling the effective implementation of the convention.

1. *Assembly debate* on 3 October 2008 (36th Sitting) (see Doc. 11702, report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, rapporteur: Mr Mendes Bota). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 3 October 2008 (36th Sitting).

5. Recalling its Recommendation 1838 (2008) – Empowering women in a modern, multicultural society – the Assembly invites the Committee of Ministers to appoint a Council of Europe special rapporteur on women's rights who, under the authority of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, would be responsible for monitoring the progress of women's rights in fields including that of combating violence against women.

6. The Assembly invites the Committee of Ministers to include the action to combat the severest and most widespread forms of violence against women in its co-operation and assistance programmes (including parliamentary programmes) and to seek extra-budgetary funds to finance these activities.

7. The Assembly invites the Committee of Ministers to step up its co-operation with the United Nations in connection with the UN Campaign to end violence against women and girls (2008-15), so that the good practices identified during the Council of Europe campaign are developed and reinforced worldwide.