Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 1654 (2009)[1]

Feminicides

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls its Resolution 1454 (2005) on the disappearance and murder of a great number of women and girls in Mexico, in which it highlighted, *inter alia*, the Mexican authorities' initial efforts to resolve the recurring problem of violence against women in northern Mexico. At the same time, the Assembly decided to "study the concept of 'feminicide' and, in co-operation with the Mexican Congress, to explore how this concept may usefully be applied in the European context, including its possible introduction into European criminal law".

2. "Feminicide" or "gynocide" is the murder of a woman because she is a woman. The word "feminicide" was coined by the Mexican Chamber of Deputies' "special commission to study and review the investigations of murders perpetrated against women in Mexico and promote justice for the victims of feminicide" to describe the murders and atrocities suffered by women because they are women.

3. All forms of violence, psychological and physical, against women are violations of their fundamental rights and intolerable infringements of their right to live a life free of violence.

4. Committed to the Council of Europe Campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence, the Assembly is continuing and strengthening its fight to eradicate this scourge, and particularly feminicides.

5. The Assembly notes with satisfaction the progress made, since its previous report in 2005, by the Mexican authorities in combating violence against women and disappearances and murders of women and girls in Mexico.

6. It emphasises in particular the creation in February 2006 of the position of a special federal prosecutor for crimes related to violence against women, and the subsequent improvements in the methods and speed of investigations.

7. It also welcomes the adoption on 1 February 2007 of a general law on women's access to a life without violence.

8. The Assembly asks Mexico, as an observer state, to continue to step up its efforts to combat violence against women and feminicides. In particular, it invites Mexico to:

8.1. ensure that the general law on women's access to a life without violence is implemented;

8.2. develop throughout its national territory working methods to increase the speed and efficiency of investigations when women disappear or are victims of violence;

8.3. set up sufficient numbers of shelters for victims;

8.4. continue its efforts to raise awareness throughout the country, and particularly among the staff in contact with victims and their families, as well as among the press and youth;

1. *Assembly debate* on 30 January 2009 (9th Sitting) (see Doc. 11781, report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, rapporteur: Mrs Err). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 30 January 2009 (9th Sitting). See also Recommendation 1861 (2009).

8.5. co-operate at regional level with the states of Central America, in particular with Guatemala, on the issue of feminicides and to share their good practices.

9. The Assembly asks Council of Europe member states, in their bilateral relations with Mexico, to place this subject on the agenda for their meetings, taking into consideration both the principles of mutual respect and co-operation enshrined in those relations, as well as the unfortunate fact that this problem is of universal scope.

10. In the context of co-operation and political dialogue between Mexico and the European Union, the Assembly asks the latter to ensure that feminicides and impunity for them are systematically placed on the agenda for meetings with the various institutions.

11. The problem of these serious violations of human rights is also a particularly significant one at global level.

12. In fact, the Assembly is dismayed that millions of women and girls are “missing” in the sense that they either remain unborn or meet an early death in many parts of the world, such as southern and western Asia, China and North Africa.

13. The Assembly notes that foetus selection, the abandonment of newborn girls and the lack of care given to girls also take place in Europe, in certain immigrant communities which prefer boys.

14. Consequently, the Assembly asks Council of Europe member states, in their relations with third countries, to encourage families to treat their daughters better, to make sure they are educated and to regard them as human assets rather than burdens.

15. The Assembly asks the European Union to place on the agenda the problem of feminicides and violence against women, both during negotiations on the admission of states to the European Union and in the context of its external relations.

16. The Assembly asks national parliaments to provide for a general and comprehensive law on equality between women and men, taking into account their right to a life free of violence, with the aim of regulating and guaranteeing equality between women and men, and to propose mechanisms for the practical achievement of equality in all spheres of public and private life, where it has not yet been realised.

17. It invites them to provide for measures to ensure that all kinds of violence against women are prevented, dealt with, punished and eliminated.

18. It invites them to consider the inclusion in criminal legislation of aggravating circumstances where female victims have suffered violence or been killed because of their gender.

19. Finally, it asks the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights to take account of gender equality issues, and particularly violence against women, in the course of his work.

20. The Assembly strongly urges Council of Europe member states and the Commissioner for Human Rights to support, at the United Nations and other international bodies in which they participate, the abolition of feminicides, including selective abortions against female foetuses.