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The situation of women in emerging democracies following the Arab revolutions

Motion for a recommendation

tabled by Ms Fatiha SAÏDI and other members of the Assembly

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

The uprisings that have shaken North Africa and the Middle East since January 2011 have led to high expectations in the countries concerned and throughout the world.

Since then the Arab Spring has produced results. Several countries have held elections that are considered to be generally satisfactory from the standpoint of international standards and they are now setting up or strengthening democratic institutions.

Despite these developments, there have been no major improvements in women's lives. Their role in society has not changed and their political representation has in most cases decreased.

Warning signals continue to be sent out by all countries in the region. In Tunisia the concept of equality between women and men, which appeared to have been acquired for decades, has sometimes been challenged during debates in the National Constituent Assembly. In Egypt, according to Amnesty International, the recently adopted constitution "limits fundamental freedoms and ignores the rights of women". In Libya women hold 16.5% of the seats in Parliament but their new role in politics has not been consolidated and has drawn negative reaction from some parties.

All this should remind us that nothing can be taken for granted where women's rights are concerned: the "window of opportunity" for strengthening equality between women and men in the regions could very quickly close again.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe must continue to exercise the care and caution that it referred to in Resolution 1873 (2012) on "Equality between women and men: a condition for the success of the Arab Spring". It should study the situation of women in these countries not only from the constitutional and legislative standpoint but also in terms of the current social and economic circumstances, with a view to informing the Committee of Ministers and guiding the Council of Europe's co-operation activities in this region.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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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
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group