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The new Abortion Law of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” violates international standards

Written declaration No. 547

This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

On 10 June 2013, the Assembly of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" adopted the Law on Termination of Pregnancy. While fully recognising States' sovereignty in the area of public health, we are gravely concerned both about the form of the debate at the Assembly of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and the content of the law, representing the first legislation since independence which restricts human and women's rights.

Without any specific urgency the law was adopted under the urgent procedure, within 2 weeks, which prevented any consultations and public debate with key stakeholders such as medical professionals, women's organisations and civil society. This causes concern regarding "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"'s commitments towards democracy and the rule of law.

The law fails to correspond to any international or European standards regarding termination of pregnancy, reproductive rights or fundamental freedoms (World Health Organisation Guidelines, Assembly Resolutions 1399 (2004), 1607 (2008). Mandatory ultrasound, waiting periods and written request are humiliating and degrading to women, contrary to human dignity and fundamental rights to privacy and confidentiality spelled out under the Constitution of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

We call on Macedonian authorities to ensure that international standards based on sound science, medicine and human rights serve as primary guidance in this area of legislation.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

ACKETOFT Tina, Sweden, ALDE
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Total = 20

1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left