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22 January 2019

Promoting parliaments free of sexism and sexual harassment

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Ms Thorhildur Sunna ÆVARSDÓTTIR and other members of the Assembly

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

#MeToo has become a global movement which has encouraged millions of women to speak up about the verbal and physical violence they are subjected to. Politics is no exception.

A 2018 study by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Parliamentary Assembly has revealed that alarming levels of sexism, harassment and violence against women are widespread in the parliaments of Council of Europe member States:

- more than 85 per cent of female MPs who took part in the study have faced psychological violence during their terms in office;
- nearly 68 per cent have received remarks about their physical appearance;
- 24.7 per cent of female MPs and 40.5 per cent of female parliamentary staff have suffered sexual harassment.

Furthermore, the study has identified under-reporting and the limited availability of internal mechanisms to deal with sexual harassment as major problems.

The study has been brought to the attention of the Presidents of parliament of Council of Europe member States, in a joint letter by the Presidents of the two institutions, together with the request to take the necessary measures to address its recommendations. Being aware of the importance of bringing about a cultural shift, the President of the Assembly has also launched the #NotInMyParliament Initiative.

The Assembly should prepare a report to ensure a concrete follow-up to the joint study, identifying effective practices which national parliaments should introduce in order to prevent and tackle sexism and sexual harassment. The Assembly should also discuss how to guarantee a safe working environment for parliamentarians and staff by leading the way in reforming its own code of conduct to explicitly tackle sexism and harassment.

Addressing this matter is of great importance for the effectiveness of any parliamentary institution, its image and its ability to set a model in promoting gender equality.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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BALFE Richard, United Kingdom, EC
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BEUS RICHEMBERGH Goran, Croatia, ALDE
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BOSCHI Maria Elena, Italy, SOC
BRGLEZ Milan, Slovenia, SOC
BRYNJÓLFSDÓTTIR Rósa Björk, Iceland, UEL
BURES Doris, Austria, SOC
ÇEVİKÖZ Ahmet Ünal, Turkey, SOC
CHUGOSHVILI Tamar, Georgia, SOC
CORLĂȚEAN Titus, Romania, SOC
CUC Alexandru Răzvan, Romania, NR
DIBRANI Adnan, Sweden, SOC
EMRE Yunus, Turkey, SOC
ESTRELA Edite, Portugal, SOC
FRESKO-ROLFO Béatrice, Monaco, ALDE
FRIDEZ Pierre-Alain, Switzerland, SOC
GAVAN Paul, Ireland, UEL
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GOUTTEFARDE Fabien, France, NR
GRAF Martin, Austria, NR
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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EC: European Conservatives Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
FDG: Free Democrats Group
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group

OVERBEEK Henk, Netherlands, UEL
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PISCO Paulo, Portugal, SOC
POCIEJ Aleksander, Poland, EPP/CD
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