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Sexual violence and conflict

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

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

In a statement made on 6 April 2022, the General Rapporteur on Violence against Women of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe denounced the horrifying sexual violence reportedly perpetrated on civilians by Russian military forces during the first month of the war in Ukraine, evidenced by the daily reports of journalists, international organisations and by first-hand witnesses and medical staff of rape and other atrocities.

In this war, sadly repeating patterns of forms of aggression between peoples which are as old as war itself, murder, pillage, torture and rape are apparently being used as weapons to break, demoralise and destroy people, homes and families.

The Council of Europe Convention on combating and preventing violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No. 210, "Istanbul Convention") criminalises rape and other forms of violence and provides for the protection of women in conflict as well as women seeking asylum. Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court includes "rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity" in its definition of crimes against humanity. In 2008 the United Nations recognised in Security Council [Resolution 1820 \(2008\)](#) on women, peace and security that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity and constitutive acts with respect to genocide.

More efforts must be made to prevent so-called "sexual" violence during conflict, to promote the ratification of the Rome Statute and Istanbul Convention, to bring perpetrators to justice, and to recognise, support, rehabilitate and compensate victims. Taking its previous [Resolution 1670 \(2009\)](#) on sexual violence against women in armed conflict as a starting point, the Parliamentary Assembly should re-examine this issue and make recommendations on preventive and dissuasive measures against sexual violence in conflict for implementation by member States.

