

PA-UfM



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PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY – UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN
ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE – UNION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE

الجمعية البرلمانية للاتحاد من اجل المتوسط

Committee on Women's Rights in the Euro-Mediterranean Countries

*Rome (Italian Chamber of Deputies)
12 and 13 May 2017*

RECOMMENDATION

on

**"Participation of women in the leadership positions
and decision making: Challenges and prospects"**

Chairwoman of the Committee: Ms. Leila CHETTAOUI (Tunisia).

The Committee on Women's Rights

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of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean:

1. Emphasizes the existence of significant differences between the laws and practice in the field of women's participation in leadership and decision-making positions, and calls for protection of civil and political rights and support for achieving a gender balanced representation at all levels, while ensuring a transparent and merit-based approach in the political and economic decision making process, including the promotion of women in senior positions of political responsibility, economic policy and programmes, workplaces, business, academia and social life in general.
2. Encourages measures such as reforms in electoral systems to make them more favorable to women's representation, gender-based antidiscrimination provisions in constitutions and electoral laws, with the necessary exception of allowing positive discrimination measures for the under-represented gender and gender sensitive civic education and elimination of gender stereotypes and built in bias against women candidates, especially within political parties but also in the media;
3. Expresses the need for action and political commitment to put a focus on the role of women policies and reforms. In order to ensure equal education, work and political representation opportunities as well as religious tolerance, in the background of a challenging demographic development, it is a need for all UfM countries to implement sustainable reforms for these purposes.
4. Hopes that the upcoming UfM Ministerial meeting on strengthening the role of women in society will be focusing on this objective and invites the UfM to design gender equality policies and multifaceted strategies for achieving parity in participation in political decision-making and leadership at all levels. The PA-UfM should further lend political support to UfM Secretariat's projects in the field of gender equality and women empowerment and assess the impact of these projects by means appropriate, equality indicators, ensuring quantified targets, clear action plans and regular monitoring mechanisms. Deputies could play a key role in the mobilization of local actors to contribute to the implementation of these projects;
5. Invites the UfM to take into consideration a project to elaborate a Euro Mediterranean map of gender balance including the objectives for promotion of gender balance, the percentages of representation of women at state and regional parliaments and in local institutions and the percentage of representation in the executive bodies; considers that a

report on the basis of this map should be submitted yearly to this Committee on Womens Rights in the EuroMediterranean Countries;

6. Welcomes the introduction of a quota system in some UfM States, and remembers it is a mean and not an objective, and it is still necessary in the Southern and Northern Mediterranean countries as an essential measure to ensure a minimum representation of women in parliaments. Recalls that the "quotas" system is a temporary measure that needs to be consolidated and complemented by other positive action measures such as zipper systems, but highlights that gender balance requires a real political will and responsibility, to promote women's participation in governments and in decision-making bodies; as well as in the economic decision making process and underlines the importance of gender educational programs starting from an early age acknowledging that women's rights are human rights and parity is essential in political life;
7. Exhorts UfM national parliaments and political parties toward reaching the critical threshold the 1/3 female political representation, as a first necessary step towards achieving equal opportunities and a more balanced representation between women and men in politics; considers it necessary to work towards the establishment of a common Mediterranean charter with the engagement of national parliaments to achieve this goal, and requests the political parties to revise their internal regulations for the purpose to enable women to assume leading positions in their structures; calls UfM governments and parliaments to take measures to promote balanced representation of women at all levels in political life in multinational organizations such as the UN, in governments and in national parliaments as well as at regional and local level and in local authorities and to increase cooperation with other actors at the international level, such as UN Women and the InterParliamentary Union, in order to promote these goals;
8. Dedicates a lot of attention to Women's role in peaceful resolution of conflicts, in peace building and conflict-related emergencies, such as providing humanitarian assistance to displaced people, and underlines that women should be fully included in peace negotiations, reconstruction efforts and political transitions;
9. Considers it necessary to strengthen women's participation in decision-making in conflict and postconflict situations, and ensure women's access to political leadership functions in post-conflict situations, all of which are essential for stability, and urges the UfM member states to implement UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 2242 on Women, Peace and Security;
10. Recommends the establishment of a priority channel for the needs of refugee women to implement sustainable actions and medical care and to avoid and prevent the violence to

which they are subjected during their travels in refugee camps and accommodation centers;

11. Takes into account the United Nations Security Council Recommendations, which condemns all forms of exploitation, by asserting that trafficking in human beings is closely linked to conflicts and thus constitutes a threat to world security; Calls for the implementation of “United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime” and “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children”;
12. Recommends to renounce to all forms of restriction on women parliamentarians notably their prosecution, their arrest and their inability to carry out their political activities;
13. Emphasizes the need of promoting a balance between family life and working life by means of measures such as sharing parental permits equally between both parents and ensuring social services for child and elderly care; underlines the importance of continuing and intensifying work towards policies supporting and promoting female entrepreneurship in the context of decent work and the removal of all barriers and social prejudices in establishing and running a business, including improving access to financial services, credit, venture capital and markets under equal conditions and encouraging access to information, training and networks for business purposes;
14. Recommends that contributions to the health care economy be better recognized; To encourage investments in social infrastructure, such as facilities and services for care of children, the elderly and the disabled, and to examine the use of new technologies to create new skills and professional roles. Stresses the need for integration and job creation programs for migrants and refugees to be better adapted to women;
15. Stresses the need to promote the dissemination of cultural programs - in schools and other educational contexts - aimed at raising awareness among boys and girls about gender diversity, and ensuring the inclusion of women less educated. Specific actions should be planned to promote and foster the participation of women and girls in scientific and research activities, starting at school age. The participation of women and girls in the fields of science and research should be monitored and evaluated;
16. Recognizing that health is crucial for social, political and economic progress, indicates that there is a need to strengthen funding, accountability and coordination among governments, agencies and international institutions for women's health. Recommends

systematic collection of health data on the basis of gender and age, so that information about women can be collected and used appropriately;

17. The Committee expresses the strong need for a spontaneous women solidarity: women leaders should lead by example and commit themselves to this cause, so that the woman proves her merit and enhances the society trust in their capabilities and men leaders should join and support this process.

Activity report 2016/2017

During the Session of 2016/2017 the Committee on Women's Rights of the PA-UfM held two meetings: the First held in Barcelona on 10 October 2016, the second held in Rome on 3 April 2017. It discussed the following points:

- Exchange of views on the theme "Participation of women in the leadership positions and decision making: Challenges and prospects".
- Debate on the Standing topics: "The condition of women in armed conflicts" and "Women and migration": the challenge of human trafficking".
- UfM's Women's Right to Health: "The WoRTH project" to reduce the incidence and mortality of women's malignancies in Albania, Montenegro and Morocco.