



SECRETARIAT

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To the members of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

Synopsis of the meeting held in Copenhagen on 1-2 March 2018

The Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, meeting in Copenhagen on 1 and 2 March 2018, with Ms Elvira Kovács (Serbia, EPP/CD) in the Chair, as regards:

- **Thursday, 1 March 2018:**
 - **Communication:** heard a communication by its Chairperson concerning expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the 2018 financial year and held an exchange of views on the Council of Europe budgetary situation with the participation of the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe;
 - **Gender equality and child maintenance** (*Rapporteur: Ms Gisela Wurm, Austria, SOC*): considered the opinion of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, unanimously approved the amendments included therein; asked its Chairperson to propose that these amendments be declared as adopted, in accordance with Rule 34.11 of the Rules of the Assembly; and asked its Chairperson to present the report during the debate in the meeting of the Standing Committee on 16 March 2018;
 - **Detainees with severe disabilities in Europe** (*Rapporteur: Mr Manuel Tornare, Switzerland, SOC*): considered a preliminary draft report;
 - **Promoting diversity and equality in politics** (*Rapporteur: Mr Killion Munyama, Poland, EPP/CD*): considered a preliminary draft report and took note that members who wished to send written contributions should send them to the Secretariat by 16 March 2018;
 - **Private and family life: achieving equality regardless of sexual orientation** (*Rapporteur: Mr Jonas Gunnarsson, Sweden, SOC*): considered an information memorandum;
 - **The rights of national minorities:** held an exchange of views with Mr Gösta Toft, Vice-President of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN), on the Minority SafePack Initiative and on the protection of national minorities in Denmark;
 - **Growing hate speech and role of the political leaders in fighting hate crime: follow-up to ECRI Recommendations** (*Rapporteur: Ms Elvira Kovács, Serbia, EPP/CD*): considered an information memorandum and held a hearing with the participation of Ms Lisbeth Knudsen, Editor in chief, Mandag Morgen, Copenhagen;

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- **International Women's Day, 8 March 2018:** considered, amended and adopted a draft declaration for publication on 8 March 2018 (see Appendix);
- **Sub-Committee on Disability, Multiple and Intersectional Discrimination:** approved a change in the composition of the Sub-Committee, concerning Ms Petra Bayr (Austria, SOC) becoming a full member;
- **Sub-Committee on the Rights of Minorities:** decided to declassify the minutes of the meeting held in Bucharest on 21 November 2017;
- **Work programme:**
 - took note of the work programme and was informed by its Chairperson that a motion for a resolution on *Achievements and challenges in implementing the Istanbul Convention on violence against women* and a motion for a recommendation on *An ambitious Council of Europe agenda for gender equality* would be tabled after the meeting;
 - *Appointment of a rapporteur:* appointed Mr Goran Beus Richembergh (Croatia, ALDE) as rapporteur for report on *Stop hate speech and acts of hatred in sport* and heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
 - *Forthcoming events:* took note of information concerning:
 - the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (United Nations, New York, 12-23 March 2018);
 - Council of Europe activities to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 21 March 2018;
 - the Conference to launch the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, Copenhagen, 3-4 May 2018;
- **Reporting back:** heard a report from Mr Piet De Bruyn (Belgium, NR) concerning his participation in the *Intersex rights symposium*, held in Reykjavik on 17-18 February 2018, and in the conference on *Challenge without response: hate crimes against LGBT people in Ukraine*, held in Kyiv on 23 February 2018;
- **Appointment of representatives (subject to the availability of funds):**
 - appointed Ms Gülsün Bilgehan (Turkey, SOC), in her capacity as General Rapporteur on violence against women, to participate in the European Parliament Inter-Parliamentary Committee meeting on *Empowering women and girls in media and ICT: key for the future*, on 8 March 2018 in Brussels;
 - appointed Ms Gabriela Heinrich (Germany, SOC), in her capacity as General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, to participate in *The Evaluation and Closing Conference of the No Hate Speech Movement youth campaign*, on 10-12 April 2018 at the European Youth Centre, Strasbourg;
 - appointed Ms Elvira Kovács (Serbia, EPP/CD), in her capacity as Chairperson of the Committee, to participate in the meetings of the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) of the Council of Europe, on 11-13 April 2018 and 5-7 December 2018 in Strasbourg;
- **Other business:**
 - heard a statement by Ms Gülsün Bilgehan (Turkey, SOC), General Rapporteur on violence against women, on obstacles to the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in some member States and subsequently held an exchange of views;
 - heard a statement by Sir Jeffrey Donaldson (United Kingdom, EC) on his intention to circulate a motion for a resolution on *Protection of freedom of religion or belief in the workplace* at a future meeting of the Committee;

- **Next meetings:** confirmed its next meetings as follows:

Plenary Committee:

- Strasbourg, during the 2nd part-session 2018 of the Assembly (23-27 April);
- Paris, 23 May 2018 (Council of Europe Office);
- Strasbourg, during the 3rd part-session 2018 of the Assembly (25-29 June);
- Paris, 19 September 2018 (Council of Europe Office);
- Strasbourg, during the 4th part-session 2018 of the Assembly (8-12 October);
- Paris, 3 December 2018 (Council of Europe Office).

Sub-Committee on the Rights of Minorities:

- Strasbourg, during the 2nd part-session 2018 of the Assembly (23-27 April);

Sub-Committee on Disability and Multiple and Intersectional Discrimination:

- Strasbourg, during the 2nd part-session 2018 of the Assembly (23-27 April).

- **Friday, 2 March 2018:** held a Conference on *Private and family life for LGBTI people*, jointly organised by the Danish Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers and the Danish Parliament, during which it:

- heard in the opening session:
 - a welcome address by Mr Michael Aastrup Jensen, Chairperson of the Danish Delegation to the Assembly;
 - opening addresses by Ms Karen Ellemann, Minister for Equal Opportunities, Denmark, and Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe;
 - an introduction by Ms Elvira Kovács, Chairperson of the Committee;
 - and a keynote address by Ms Katherine Zappone, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Ireland;
- held a *Round table on Rainbow families: Achieving equality in private and family life regardless of sexual orientation*: with the participation of Mr Mogens Jensen (Denmark, SOC), as moderator and with the following speakers:
 - Mr Piet De Bruyn (Belgium, NR), General rapporteur on the rights of LGBTI people;
 - Ms Nicoletta Finter, Federal Ministry of Family, Children and Women, Germany, Representative of the European Governmental LGBTI Focal Points Network;
 - Mr Jesús Santos and his son Gabriel Santos, Network of European LGBTI Family Associations (NELFA), Spain;
 - and Professor Robert Wintemute, Professor of Human Rights Law, King's College London, United Kingdom.

Sonia Sirtori, Sarah Burton, Giorgio Loddo

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Appendix

Declaration on the occasion of International Women's Day, 8 March 2018 adopted by the Committee on 1 March 2018

"I too can make equality happen"

On 8 March 2018, as International Women's Day is celebrated around the world, the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, which brings together members of parliament from Council of Europe member States, acknowledges the progress that has been achieved towards greater equality between women and men while taking stock of the challenges that lie ahead.

Deeply ingrained discrimination based on a patriarchal mentality, often subtly concealed and aggravated by violence and in particular sexual violence, affects women throughout their lives, limiting their freedom, their chances and the exercise of their rights. Among them, migrant women are particularly affected.

In the economic sphere, the gender pay gap, the glass ceiling and the misconception that women are unsuited for work in certain sectors or professions continue to hold back their careers and opportunities. Many women also shoulder the physical and psychological double burden of household chores and employment, struggling to combine private, family and professional life.

Equal participation and representation of women and men is crucial in every aspect of public and private life, including in politics, in order to redress imbalances and inequalities and change the general mindset which confines women to traditional roles.

Everyone has the responsibility to contribute to the huge leap forward which is necessary to build a society in which men and women enjoy effective equality. It is up to each and every one of us, as social actors and in the different environments in which we operate, to dismantle the stereotypes and prejudice that feed inequality between women and men. No contribution is too small.

As politicians, legislators and members of the Parliamentary Assembly, we should set the example and be at the forefront in promoting an ambitious agenda for women's empowerment and equal rights and dignity, and consistently act for its implementation.

"I too can make equality happen" should be our personal and public commitment, on 8 March and beyond.

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Celebrating #IWD2018, @PACE_Equality says #IToo can #MakeEqualityHappen