Press release | 10.02.2010

Gender equality

EU Parliament issues call for action to Commission and Member States

Today the European Parliament plenary adopted a progressive report on the EU's challenges in the field of equality between women and men. Dutch Green MEP **Marije Cornelissen**, a Greens/EFA Group spokesperson on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, commented:

"I welcome that the European Parliament has adopted a progressive report on gender equality. It is now up to the Commission and Member States to take on the challenges and turn well-intentioned words into concrete action.

The European Parliament has recognised the gender aspects of the economic and financial crisis. In reporting on the crisis, most attention was placed on redundancies in the industrial sectors that are predominately occupied by men. Too little attention is paid to the special ways in which women are affected. Gender aspects must be considered in European, national and international recovery plans as well as in the EU's new economic strategy for 2020."

"On its first day in office the EU Commission now has a comprehensive and important 'to do' list with Parliament's requests for equality between women and men in the EU. Despite 35 years of EU legislation there has been virtually no progress made with regard to the implementation of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value: the gender pay gap is still 17.4% on average in the EU, with highest rates at 35%. Parliament's demand for the revision of Equal Pay Directive has been constantly and stubbornly ignored by the EU Commission."

"Parliament acknowledged the need for EU legislation on paternity leave. This is an important step for better division of caring responsibilities between women and men. The Greens are delighted that the Parliament has agreed that women must have access to contraception and abortion. Women should have control over their sexual and reproductive rights."

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