Press release | 10.12.2013

Sexual health and rights

Centre-right MEPs show disdain for women's rights in rejection of report

The European Parliament today failed to adopt a report by its women's rights committee on sexual health and reproductive rights, after a narrow majority of MEPs voted to back an alternative resolution by centre-right political groups, which aimed to bury the issue (1). Commenting after the vote, Green spokesperson on women's rights **Ulrike Lunacek** said:

"Centre-right MEPs have today brought shame on the European Parliament and its long-standing role in promoting basic rights. Apart from the myopia of rejecting this report, the ugly scenes surrounding today's vote on sexual and reproductive health and rights, with cat calls and jeering from rightwing MEPs, show their disdain for women's rights.

"The report adopted by the EP's women's rights committee, which was rejected today, aimed to highlight the importance of these basic rights for the health and well-being of women across Europe. Contrary to the claims of those lobbying against it, the non-legislative report respected the subsidiarity of EU member states and did not seek to impose a universal view on pregnancy termination, other than that where it is provided, it should be safe. Instead, it was a report about basic rights.

"Sexual and reproductive health and rights are under increasing pressure in some member states, despite being based on core EU values and central to efforts to promote gender equality. The Estrela report looked at the situation in the EU and set out a common EU approach to ensure SRHR are prioritised and promoted. With diverging rates of maternal mortality and teenage birth in Europe, more needs to be done to promote best practice in the EU. Sadly, ideological myopia has totally skewed the debate on this report. The outcome today - and the conduct of centre-right MEPs - is a sorry episode for the EP."

(1) The alternative EPP-ECR resolution was adopted with 334 votes in favour and 327 against.

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Responsible MEPs



Ulrike Lunacek

EP Vice-President, Member

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