

**Question for oral answer O-000121/2016  
to the Council**

Rule 128

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on behalf of the PPE Group

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on behalf of the S&D Group

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on behalf of the ALDE Group

**Jean Lambert, Ulrike Lunacek, Terry Reintke, Josep-Maria Terricabras, Ernest Urtasun**

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**Malin Björk, Patrick Le Hyaric, Kateřina Konečná, Kostas Chrysogonos, Kostadinka Kuneva, Merja Kyllönen, Jiří Maštálka, Marie-Christine Vergiat**

on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

**Helga Stevens, Julie Girling**

Subject: The EU accession to the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women

On the eve of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the European Parliament notes that little progress has been made in combating violence against women and gender-based violence.

Violence against women and gender-based violence represent a violation of fundamental rights and an extreme form of discrimination, which is both the cause and the consequence of gender inequalities.

On 4 March 2016, the Commission proposed the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention, the first legally binding instrument on preventing and combating violence against women at international level. All the EU Member States have signed it, but only fourteen of them have ratified it. The EU accession will provide greater efficiency and coherence in its internal and external policies in combating and preventing violence against women and gender-based violence across Europe, and ensure better implementation of EU laws, programmes and funds adopted to that end. It will contribute to wider EU objectives on gender equality, anti-discrimination, public health and economic growth. It will enhance the EU's accountability and its role in combatting violence against women and gender-based violence on the international stage. It will also ensure more and better data collection at European level on the nature and the extent of violence against women. Last but not least, the accession by the EU to the Istanbul Convention will exert renewed political pressure on the Member States to ratify this instrument.

- What is the state of play on the negotiation of the EU's signing and concluding of the Istanbul Convention?
- What are the concrete actions that the Presidency has taken to speed up the Council on the signing and on the conclusion of the Istanbul Convention?

- How long does the Presidency consider it will take to arrive at the conclusion of the EU accession to the Convention?
- What role does the Presidency envisage for the European Parliament in the Convention's monitoring process?
- What other concrete steps is the Presidency taking to ensure that the Member States sign and ratify the Istanbul Convention?

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