

NEWSLETTER – 25 March 2021

WORDS FROM THE CHAIR

Dear readers,

This week's meeting is a special one. Together with the FEMM Committee, we will organise a hearing on the foreign interference on the financing of anti-choice organisations in the EU. The issue we will be addressing is extremely serious.



It concerns our core beliefs and values. The rights for women to make decisions over their own bodies are challenged by very powerful campaigns all across Europe. Russian and American actors have invested a lot in these campaigns in order to push for a general ban of abortion. These interferences must stop. European citizens should not be manipulated by ideological agendas shaped abroad and imposed on them through foreign money.

Interferences in our democratic life do not concern only our electoral processes, they also aim at influencing ideological and ethic debates in our societies. This is why I am so much looking forward to this joint meeting with FEMM.

Raphaël GLUCKSMANN

ON THE AGENDA

25 March

Joint hearing with FEMM: Foreign interference on the financing of anti-choice organisations in the EU - 13.35-15.35 (Semi-remote meeting via room: ANTALL 4Q1)

The meeting will address the issue of foreign interference on the financing of anti-abortion/anti-choice organisations in the EU that undermine

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) of women.

Invited experts are:

Ms Véronique SEHIER is a Member of the French Economic, Social and Environmental Council and former President of Planning Familial. Furthermore, she was a member of the High Council for Equality between Women and Men until 2015. Ms SEHIER has investigated anti-choice networks in France. She campaigns for equality between women and men in a democratic and inclusive society.

Ms Caroline HICKSON is the Regional Director of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) European Network. IPPF promotes sexual and reproductive health rights for all people. The global non-governmental organisation receives financial support from various governments, trusts and foundations, but it is also being thwarted by the lobbying efforts of anti-abortion groups.

Ms HICKSON has worked in the NGO sector for 30 years. In the past, she was the Director of Communications and Strategic Partnerships at Fairtrade International and she served as Director of Public Affairs at Concern Worldwide.

Ms Claire PROVOST is a global investigations editor at openDemocracy, focused on the project *Tracking the Backlash* against women's and LGBTIQ rights. In her work, she covers issues such as gender, sexuality and social justice. Ms PROVOST and openDemocracy have been tracking US religious right groups funding anti-abortion organisations and the spread of misinformation on the matter. Previously, Ms PROVOST worked at The Guardian as a data journalist and was a fellow at the Centre for Investigative Journalism at the University of London, Goldsmiths.

Mr Neil DATTA has been Secretary of the European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual & Reproductive Rights since 2004. In his work, he deals with the field of political involvement in population and development. Moreover, he has conducted in-depth research on anti-choice activity in Europe.

Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in the European Union including Disinformation

Before becoming EPF Secretary, Mr DATTA coordinated the Parliamentary Programme of the International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network.

NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 23 March 13.00-14.30

**Informal meeting with the DSCA on
Disinformation and Foreign Interference in the
South Caucasus**

Tuesday 13 April 13.45-15.45

Presentation of PolDep Study

Tuesday 13 April 16.15-18.15

Webinar on interference through advertisement

Thursday 15 April 13.45-16.45

In association with AIDA:

**Hearing on Tech Developments and Regulatory
Approaches regarding Disinformation**

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