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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Questions for Oral Answer B6-0015/2005 and B6-0016/2005

pursuant to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Maria Carlshamre

on behalf of the ALDE Group

on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women - Platform for Action (Beijing + 10)

European Parliament resolution on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women - Platform for Action (Beijing + 10)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the celebration of International Women’s Day on 8 March 2005,
- having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Political Rights of Women (31 March 1953),
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 18 December 1979,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 June 1986 on the results of the UN Conference concluding the Decade for Women (1975-1985) held in Nairobi (15-26 July 1985),¹
- having regard to the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993,
- having regard to its resolution of 4 July 1996 on the follow-up to the Cairo Conference on Population and Development,²
- having regard to its resolution of 15 June 1995 on the participation by the European Union in the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing: Equality, Development and Peace,³
- having regard to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted in Beijing on 15 September 1995 by the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace,
- having regard to its resolution of 21 September 1995 on the Fourth World Conference in Beijing,⁴
- having regard to the Council Recommendation of 2 December 1996 on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process,⁵
- having regard to its resolution of 16 September 1997 on incorporating equal opportunities for women and men into all Community policies and activities – ‘mainstreaming’,⁶

¹ OJ C 176, 14.7.1986, P.64.

² OJ C 211, 22.7.1996, P. 31.

³ OJ C 166, 3.7.1995, P. 92.

⁴ OJ C 269, 16.10.1995, P.146.

⁵ OJ L 319, 10.12.1996, P.11.

⁶ OJ C 304, 6.10.1997, P. 50.

⁷ OJC 59, 23.2.2001, P.258.

- having regard to its resolution of 3 May 2000 on the follow-up to the Beijing Action Platform (2000/2020(INI)),⁷
- having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, although women make up more than half of the European Union's population and electorates, they continue to be under-represented in economic, social and political decision-making bodies throughout the Union,
- B. whereas women's and children's rights continue to be violated throughout the world, but are an integral, inalienable and indivisible part of universal human rights,
- C. whereas equal access to goods and services and economic independence for women is essential if equality is to be achieved across the whole of society,
- D. whereas the empowerment of women is a crucial factor in the eradication of poverty and a necessary precondition for the Lisbon Strategy goals being achieved and its target of 60% of women in the work force by 2010 met,
- E. whereas the rising employment rate in Europe means that specific measures must be promoted in order to facilitate access to skilled jobs for women, who are the first to be hit by unemployment,
- F. whereas the wage gap between men and women in Europe is still, on average, between 16% and 33% and whereas no real progress has been made on the implementation and practice of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, which was introduced thirty years ago by Directive 75/117/EC on equal pay for men and women,
- G. whereas measures to help with balancing private and working life are a prerequisite for promoting gender equality in employment and society in line with the conclusions of the Barcelona and Lisbon summits,
- H. whereas experience shows that if full account is to be taken of women's interests in society, at least one third of those elected to all institutional bodies must be women, and whereas 50% is the target if parity democracy is to be achieved,
- I. whereas millions of women still lack information and education on health and have no access to the treatment they need, especially for diseases such as HIV/AIDS,
- J. whereas the 1995 Platform for Action expressly mentions freedom of decision and responsibility on matters related to sexuality, full respect for the integrity of the individual and equality in matters of sexual relations and reproduction,
- K. appreciating the role played by the Luxembourg Presidency and the Commission in the preparatory work for, and during the negotiations at, the 49th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women,
- 1. Recalls that the human rights of women are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights, and states that the promotion and protection of women's rights are fundamental prerequisites for building a true democracy;

2. Underlines that the situation of women in the EU has not improved substantially since 1995, despite the implementation and practice of existing legislation such as Directive 75/117/EEC on the application of the principle of equal pay for women and men and Directive 76/207/EEC on the principle of equal treatment as regards employment and vocational training;
3. Welcomes the Commission's proposal for a directive on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast version) as an important step towards more certainty and clarity in the field of gender equality;
4. Welcomes the adoption of the directive implementing the principle of equal treatment for women and men in access to and supply of goods and services and regards the directive as an important tool to ensure gender equality; regrets, however, that not enough progress has been made towards completely eliminating the use of gender as a discriminating factor for determining premiums and benefits in relation to insurance and related financial activities;
5. Recognises that some positive measures have been taken in relation to violence against women; stresses, however, the lack of a clear political commitment to addressing and eradicating domestic violence against women and trafficking in women, including legislative measures such as asylum rights for victims; calls on the Commission, therefore, to declare 2006 European Year against Violence towards Women;
6. Recalls that education and training are essential to the achievement of equality between women and men and underlines the need for lifelong learning and vocational training to promote equal access for women to skilled jobs and all levels of professional life;
7. Insists that priority be given to the gender dimension at UN World Conferences, such as Cairo +10 and the World Summit for Social Development in 2005, taking into account the UN Millennium Development Goals;
8. Acknowledges that women's health in the EU has improved significantly over the past decade; stresses, however, there are still many factors standing in the way of gender equality in relation to health; requests, therefore, that different patterns in women's health be taken into account when adopting European programmes and that special attention be paid to reproductive health;
9. Calls on the Council to adopt gender-specific indicators related to the feminisation of poverty in order to pursue a more concerted policy in the field of social protection;
10. Reiterates that women should constitute 40% of the staff of conciliation, peace-keeping, conflict-prevention and disaster aid operations, including fact-finding and observer missions acting on behalf of the EU and its Member States;
11. Recalls the importance of individual freedom of expression, but underlines the role of the media in establishing values and gender stereotypes; welcomes, therefore, a debate on the role of the media aimed at finding and establishing the right balance between freedom of expression and the right to human dignity;

12. Calls on the Commission and the Council to propose measures to improve women's access to full participation in economic, social and political decision making, and stresses the importance of implementing gender mainstreaming in all European policies;
13. Welcomes the legal reforms that have been carried out in Turkey, but reiterates its concern that women are still victims of honour killings and violence and calls, therefore, on the Commission and the Council to continue their cooperation with the Turkish authorities and to follow closely the women's rights situation in Turkey;
14. Calls on the Commission and the Council to ensure that all programmes and activities financed via the EU budgets, especially the structural funds, promote gender budgeting;
15. Calls on the political parties, at both national and European level, to review their party structures and procedures in order to remove all barriers that directly or indirectly discriminate against the participation of women, and to adopt appropriate strategies aimed at reaching a better balance of women and men in elected assemblies, including positive measures such as quotas;
16. Calls on the Commission to propose a follow-up strategy on the indicators put forward by the various EU Presidencies;
17. Requests agreement on a Fifth UN World Conference on Women, to be held as soon as possible with a view to assessing the advancement of women in the areas of equality, development and peace;
18. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the EU Member States and the UN Secretary-General.