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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-1365/2016**

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# PROPOSAL FOR A RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL

pursuant to Rule 134(1) of the Rules of Procedure

on the EU priorities for the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status  
of Women

**Constance Le Grip**

on behalf of the PPE Group

**Maria Arena**

on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament recommendation to the Council on the EU priorities for the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women and its priority theme ‘Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work’,
  - having regard to the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995, the Declaration and Platform for Action adopted in Beijing and the subsequent outcome documents of the United Nations Beijing +5, +10, +15, +20 Special Sessions on further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted on 9 June 2000, 11 March 2005, 2 March 2010 and 9 March 2015 respectively,
  - having regard to the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),
  - having regard to Rule 134(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of the EU, enshrined in the Treaty on European Union, and one of its objectives and tasks, and whereas the EU is also guided by this principle in its external action as both dimensions should be coordinated;
- B. whereas gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a precondition for advancing development and reducing poverty and a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world;
- C. whereas the fifth Sustainable Development Goal is to achieve gender equality and to empower all women and girls worldwide; whereas empowering women means enabling women to gain more power and control over their lives;
- D. whereas women are important economic agents worldwide and women’s economic participation can grow economies, create jobs and build inclusive prosperity; whereas countries that value and empower women to participate fully in the labour market and decision-making are more stable, prosperous and secure;
- E. whereas 20 after Beijing, despite solid evidence that women’s empowerment is central to reducing poverty, promoting development and addressing the world’s most urgent challenges, EU governments recognised that no country had fully achieved equality between women and men and empowerment for women and girls, that progress had been slow and uneven, that major gaps and forms of discrimination remained and that new challenges had emerged in the implementation of the Platform for Action’s 12 critical areas of concern;
- F. whereas the EU plays an important role in fostering the empowerment of women and girls, within the EU as well as worldwide, by political and financial means;

1. Addresses the following recommendation to the Council:

**General conditions for empowering women and girls**

- (a) Confirm its commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action and to the range of actions for gender equality outlined therein;
- (b) Encourage policies to invest in women's and girls' access to education and vocational training and to eliminate gender disparities in these fields;
- (c) Combat all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres as a serious breach of their physical and psychological integrity preventing them from realising their full potential;
- (d) Devise policies to promote and support decent work and full employment for all women;
- (e) Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care and reproductive rights as agreed in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the review conferences thereof.

**Enhancing women's economic empowerment and overcoming barriers on the labour market**

- (f) Call on all parties to ratify and implement the CEDAW, giving special attention to Articles 1, 4, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15;
- (g) Encourage all parties to enact policies and laws ensuring equal pay for equal work and work of equal value;
- (h) Work towards policies supporting women's enterprise development in the context of decent work and the removal of all barriers in their setting up of a business, including finance or access to credit and markets;
- (i) Promote new investment in social care infrastructure, education and health care and in public provision of accessible, affordable and quality child and dependent care;
- (j) Support policies that favour the equal sharing of domestic and care responsibilities between women and men;
- (k) Support the establishment of an ILO convention to provide an international standard to address gender-based violence in the workplace;
- (l) Encourage women and girls through awareness raising campaigns and support programmes to enter academic and research careers in all scientific fields, with a special focus on the technology and digital economy;
- (m) Ensure coherence between EU external policies and the sustainable

development goals;

### **Ensuring women's equal share at all levels of decision-making**

- (n) Protect civil and political rights and support ensuring gender balance in decision-making at all levels, including political decision-making, economic policy and programs, business or academia;
- (o) Involve social partners in economic decision making;
- (p) Strengthen women's leadership and participation in decision making in conflict and post-conflict solutions and ensure for countries emerging out of conflicts, women's access to jobs and markets, essential to stability;

### **Addressing the needs of the most marginalised women**

- (q) Facilitate land ownership and access to credit for rural women, to enable them to become economically independent and to fully participate in and benefit from rural development;
- (r) Call for the engagement of rural women's organisations in local, regional, national and global policymaking, particularly where their lives could be affected by the relevant decisions;
- (s) Call for the ratification and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including Article 6 thereof entitled 'Women with disabilities';
- (t) Emphasise the right of migrant women workers, especially migrant domestic workers, to decent working conditions;

### **Translating these commitments into expenditure and making them more visible**

- (u) Mobilise the resources required to realise women's economic rights and reduce gender inequality, including through the use of the existing instruments at EU and Member State level;
  - (v) Ensure the full involvement of Parliament and its Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality in the decision-making process regarding the EU's position at the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women;
2. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council and, for information, to the Commission.