

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

12.2.2007

0017/2007

WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure

by Véronique Mathieu, Anne Van Lancker, Sophia in 't Veld, Luisa Morgantini and Hiltrud Breyer

on obstetric fistula

Lapse date: 14.5.2007

Written declaration on obstetric fistula

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas obstetric fistula is a serious injury resulting from difficult childbirth, the devastating effects of which are currently affecting over two million women, most of them very young and resident in developing countries,
 - B. whereas fistula, which often results in the death of the child, has serious physical and psychological after-effects, as well as leading to social stigmatisation,
 - C. whereas in Europe prevention and treatment of obstetric fistula began more than a century ago, and the condition is now virtually eradicated,
 - D. whereas the inability of public health services in developing countries to provide access to preventive and curative care is damaging to the rights and dignity of women,
1. Calls on the Commission and the Council to:
 - a. take urgent action and support any initiatives aimed at:
 - preventing fistula by enforcement of laws on the legal age for marriage, promotion of universal access to urgent obstetric care and reproductive health education and improvement of the status of women;
 - improving health systems, sanitary infrastructure, and training and transfer of medical personnel to ensure effective treatment of fistula;
 - encouraging social rehabilitation of women after treatment;
 - b. step up their political and financial support for the fifth Millennium Development Goal on maternal health;
 - c. support international efforts to eradicate fistula, particularly the global campaign launched by UNFPA;
 2. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Council, the Commission and the Member States.