

Thursday, 13 March 1997

(c) B4-0201, 0249 and 0259/97

Resolution on the violation of women's rights

The European Parliament,

- having regard to International Women's Day,
 - having regard to the declarations of the 1993 Vienna conference on human rights and the action platform of the 1995 Beijing conference on women's rights,
- A. aware that equal treatment and equal opportunities are goals which have not yet been achieved,
- B. whereas according to UN statistics the great majority of victims of human rights violations throughout the world are women and children, particularly among the refugees and victims of war,
- C. whereas, according to Unicef estimates, 130 million women have been the victims of sexual mutilation, with 2 million new cases being added every year, an unknown number die as a result and all the victims of this torture remain irreversibly mutilated for the rest of their lives,
- D. whereas prostitution networks use girls and women, especially those who are obliged to leave their place of origin because of war or social or political crises,
- E. deeply concerned at the scale of Islamic fundamentalist movements in a number of countries, which are seeking to introduce increasingly harsh restrictions on women's fundamental rights and civil liberties,
- F. particularly concerned at the severity with which the Sharia is being enforced in Afghanistan, especially in the case of women,
1. Strongly reaffirms the principle that the rights of women and girls form an inalienable, integral and indissociable part of the universal rights of the human person;
 2. Expresses its solidarity with women who, in spite of heavy pressure and threats, continue to demonstrate publicly against the violation of their fundamental rights;
 3. Calls on states to act on the undertakings they gave at the Beijing world conference on women's rights;
 4. Considers that the importance which the Council and Commission attach to respect for women's rights in the countries with which the Union is linked through association agreements is a test of its capacity to assert and apply respect for women's fundamental rights;
 5. Strongly condemns the practice of sexual mutilation and calls on the Member States to prohibit sexual mutilation on their territory;
 6. Repeats its call on the Member States to ensure that persecution on the grounds of sex is recognized as one of the criteria for granting the right of asylum in the European Union;
 7. Calls on the Member States to make representations to the UN Commission on Human Rights for the problem of violations of women's rights to be given serious consideration there;
 8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the UN Secretary-General and the Council of Europe.
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