# Resolution on the EU priorities for the 64th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

2019/2967(RSP) - 13/02/2020 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 463 votes to 108, with 50 abstentions, a resolution on the EU priorities for the 64th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups.

Although the Beijing Platform for Action was created 25 years ago, many of the challenges identified in 1995 are still relevant today (such as the gender pay and pension gap, low employment rates for women, under-representation of women in decision-making bodies, unequal distribution of unpaid work and gender-based violence).

The CSW64 to be held from 9 to 20 March 2020 shall be devoted to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome of the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly and the full realisation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

With this in mind, Parliament recommended Council to:

- reaffirm its full commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action and subsequent review conferences and the range of actions for gender equality set out therein;

- ensure a positive outcome of the CSW64, including the adoption of a set of ambitious commitments for the future, as set out in the Political Declaration;

- ensure that the EU has a common position and takes firm action to unequivocally denounce the backlash against gender equality and measures that undermine women's rights, autonomy and empowerment in all areas;

- 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 CSW64;

- commit to strongly supporting the work of UN Women, a central actor in the UN system working to advance women's rights;

- strongly engage in Action Coalitions, together with the Commission, and to fulfil its commitment on annual reporting and monitoring in the context of the progress report on the work of the Coalitions for Action.

Parliament made a series of recommendations in the following areas:

***The EU as a global actor***

Parliament recommended that the Council take a strong leadership role in achieving girls' and women's rights and gender equality in its external action, especially in its security, foreign, development and cooperation policy and to renew the Gender Action Plan for external relations after 2020 and make it even more ambitious.

The Council is invited to; (i) step up efforts in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in order to ensure that no woman or girl is discriminated against, subjected to violence or exclusion and deprived of access to health, food, education and employment opportunities; (ii) encourage greater participation of women in peacekeeping and peace-building, as well as in mediation processes and on EU military and civilian crisis management missions; (iii) include a gender perspective in the EU and Members State's humanitarian aid response, as well as a sexual and reproductive health and rights perspective.

***Women's economic and political empowerment***

As women's economic empowerment is essential for sustainable development and economic growth, Parliament recommended support for women's entrepreneurship, strict application of the principle of equal pay and the role of women in trade agreements, as well as the inclusion of women in emerging economic sectors such as information and communication technologies (ICTs), science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), the digital sector, artificial intelligence and the green economy, which are levers for sustainable growth and women's financial independence.

***Eradicating gender-based violence and guaranteeing women's fundamental rights***

In the EU, as many as one in two women have been victims of sexual harassment and one in three women have suffered physical and/or sexual violence.

The Council was called upon to condemn all forms of gender-based violence and to deplore that women and girls continue to be exposed to psychological, physical, sexual and economic violence, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, cyber violence, stalking, rape, early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), so-called 'honour crimes', forced abortions, forced sterilisation, sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings. Concern about the phenomenon of feminicide should also be taken into account.

Parliament also suggested that the EU urgently conclude the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, on the basis of broad accession and without any restrictions, and encouraging its ratification by all Member States.

***Gender-responsive and inclusive policies and institutions***

Parliament recommended ensuring gender mainstreaming as a key strategy to support the achievement of gender equality by ensuring the integration of gender issues into all policy areas, stressing the particular importance of carrying out gender impact assessments.

The Council is invited to mainstream gender equality concerns into the EU's environment and climate change policies as well as the Union's migration policy.

Members also called for the adoption of the proposal for an anti-discrimination directive aimed at implementing, in a gender-sensitive way, the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.