



**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
OF THE UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN**

Committee on Women's Rights
Amman (Jordan) - 8 and 9 February 2014

RECOMMENDATIONS

Tabled on behalf of **the Committee on Women's Rights**
By Chairwoman Mrs Samira MERAI-FRIAA (Tunisia)

on the following themes:

- **Woman and job creation in the Euro-Mediterranean region**
- **Situations of Syrian women in refugee camps in the neighbouring countries**

Woman and job creation in the Euro-Mediterranean region:

The Committee on Women's Rights:

1. Welcomes the UfM Ministerial Conference on Women held in Paris on 12 September 2013, endorse the Final Declaration of the Paris conference, and calls international players such as the EU to step up their level of mobilisation and support for the implementation of this declaration and carry out the relevant monitoring;
2. Welcomes the efforts deployed by the UfM Secretariat to promote concrete projects for the employment of women, namely «Young Women as Job Creators », «Developing Women Empowerment», and «Skills for Success–Employability Skills for Women», and hopes that these projects will develop women's skills in sectors of rewarding and remunerative activities. Also, welcome the UfM's regional "Med4jobs" initiative which aims to increase

the employability of young people and women, close the gap between labour demand and supply, and foster a culture of entrepreneurship and private sector development;

3. The Committee welcomes the content of the new Tunisian Constitution, which guarantees women's rights, in particular by including equal opportunities in all areas and adopting the principle of equal numbers of men and women in elected assemblies;
4. Draw attention to the fact that the level of involvement of women in economic life in the Euro-Mediterranean region is still the lowest across the globe with less than 25% of women workforce in 2009, mostly in the public sector; North Africa faced the lowest participation of women in the labour force with 18.4% in 2011;
5. Points out that the region's development, growth and competitiveness depend on making full use of the human capital at all levels and in all sectors of economic activity, and urges in this regard the participation of women in implementing the mechanisms of good governance, administering economic and local affairs, and in decision-making positions, and calls for their presence in the economic, social and environmental councils of the UfM Member States to be strengthened;
6. Notes that vulnerable employment is present in all Euro-Mediterranean countries with a higher percentage in rural and less developed areas due to low wages and unsafe working conditions, domestic and agriculture workers are particularly affected by vulnerable employment; And considers that the creation of decent jobs is a high priority in the region; And calls for stricter sanctions for employers engaging workers without work permits or contracts, which are not in line with the rules and regulations of the International Labour Organisation;
7. Stresses the importance of entrepreneurial education and training, as well as encouragement, for women in both urban and rural areas, and urges on focusing more on specialized vocational and technical education to make sure that university certificates correspond to the needs of the labour market through the combined efforts of the government, the private sector and trade unions, and stresses the importance of future employment opportunities for the whole of the qualified human capital in towns and cities

to enable these to become centres of innovation and growth, thereby enhancing the region's appeal;

8. Calls on the Euro-Mediterranean countries and on financial institutions to increase the share of funding dedicated to training programs for women, particularly those who have been deprived of education, and to strengthen the institutional and financial support to small and medium-sized enterprises led by women as well as the incentive mechanisms and access to credit to increase the economic power of women and assist them in individual initiatives by prioritizing integrated training programmes between the EU and the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries; recalls in this context the need to create a Mediterranean investment bank based on the same principles as the European Investment Bank in order to focus on the needs of the region and on the fundamental criteria and the principles of microcredit;
9. Urges Member of the Union for the Mediterranean to adopt a gender approach into planning and budgeting, taking into consideration the interests and needs of women, and make sure to include unpaid work (such as caring for children and elderly) in the GDP of the State;
10. Notes that women are the first to suffer from unemployment, precariousness and budgetary cuts in the areas of employment, health, and education, and invites the countries of the Northern shore to reduce governments' austerity measures in these vital sectors that directly affect women;
11. Considers necessity to facilitate women's access to new information and communication technologies (ICT) which have become essential in most sectors of activities, as the good knowledge of these tools an asset to be hired, but is also an effective way to access to information related to job vacancies, new trends in the labour market, improving of skills and knowledge, and marketing of products etc; notes that wider access to the new ICT would also improve women's employment opportunities by providing them with a greater chance of reconciling work and family needs;

12. Calls for a safe and accommodating working environment for women by putting in place a public policy of reconciliation of work and private life, and invest in childcare facilities or other dependents persons at the workplace with suitable opening hours to make it easier to professional activities of women, and ensures the adoption of clear legal texts to grant maternity leave, parental leave, leave nursing and others;
13. Proposes to examine the possibility of awarding a label by the Committee on Women's Rights to the private institutions or companies that promote women's employment and careers and consider them as institutions or companies favorable to women;
14. Calls for the elaboration and review, and a guarantee of full implementation in all the UfM Member States, as well as better enforcement, of laws and treaties aimed at combating all forms of discrimination between men and women at work, both in terms of access to economic life and freedom to establish businesses and of salary, recruitment, training, promotion and others; and prevent the adoption of legislation reducing employment opportunities for women such as the one preventing them from practicing certain professions;
15. Draws attention to the importance of launching awareness campaigns targeting men and women, with the aim of overcoming stereotypes and introducing an effective and balanced gendered social change in the division of labour in public and in private;
16. Calls on the media and civil society to develop more examples of successful women and women leaders, to promote the positive changes women bring to the economy, and propose to prepare a compendium of best practices in the field of employment of women to enjoy the experiences of other countries and consider them as role models;
17. Calls, in the context of these positive changes, for a strengthening of women's right to access real estate, to receive inheritances and pass on their property, to recognize their property rights under all circumstances, and to recognize the legitimacy of women's individual right to property;

18. Stresses that an improved acknowledgement of women's social rights and their positive contribution to the economy of a country is not possible without the active participation of women in public debate and political decision-making;
19. Underlines the need to have reliable and up-to-date statistics on women's situation at national and regional level; especially on employment and entrepreneurship, and introduce these statistics into a website dedicated to the Committee on Women's Rights, in order to monitor appropriately progress, to explain success stories, share good practices and know-how, and to analyze the role of women in the development of the region's economies;

Situations of Syrian women in refugee camps in Jordan:

The Committee on Women's Rights:

20. Notes, with regret, that the woman is the most affected by armed conflict, where she is used as a weapon of war with negative effects (psychological and social sexual physical violence);
21. Notes UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 2160;
22. Takes into account the fact that preventing sexual violence is essential in order to resolve conflicts, promote development and consolidate a sustainable peace;
23. Deplore the violence taking place in Syria of which the main victims are innocent civilians, including very often women and children, and urges the belligerents to follow transition talks to end the crisis. In this regard, welcomes and approves the declaration of the PA-UfM Bureau on the situation in Syria, submitted jointly by the chairs of the Committees adopted on 11 January 2014, as well as the final declaration of the regional Conference of NGOs in the Euro-Mediterranean region, about "violence against women, crimes and impunity", adopted on 12 November 2013;
24. Notes the high number of Syrian refugees in the Zaatari Camp in the south of Jordan, that has a negative impact on social and economic conditions in this country, and deplores the

increase in the number and requirements of refugees, which leads to a deteriorating situation of refugees, of which the main victims are women who suffer, not only from the physical and psychological consequences of the war, but are also victims of rape and sexual abuse, forced and early marriages, prostitution and crimes of honor, and repudiation, as well as the malnutrition, lack of water, large number of diseases and lack of health care;

25. Welcomes the efforts deployed by Jordanian authorities and those of neighbouring countries to improve the situation of Syrian refugees, and urges the international community and the members of the Union for the Mediterranean states to coordinate funding and to support and provide further financial and material support to countries hosting Syrian refugees including Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon to face this crisis, and work to share the burden with them guaranteeing the right of refugees, especially women who are victims of sexual violence to demand asylum in neighbouring countries and in the European Union, and ensure adequate conditions for women asylum seekers;
26. Calls for further implementation of an ongoing EMHRN programme aimed at reinforcing networking and capacities of Syrian human rights activists to document violations, including violence against women, and particularly sexual abuses; supports the development of expertise, at the request of the government concerned, to reinforce national capacities enabling the perpetrators to be pursued and to improve the response and support for victims; offers full support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the UN in the fight against sexual violence in times of conflict;
27. Expresses support for Palestinian refugees who face difficult situations, especially women living in tough conditions circumstances and suffer from all kinds of violence because of the occupation, and calls to give them more importance at both the economic and the political level;
28. Stresses the importance of ensuring adequate and effective protection mechanisms for women victims of violence and their families, including children born as a result of acts of sexual violence, such as shelters; medical and psycho-social services, including economic assistance for the rehabilitation, support, and integration of victims into society; calls on

the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region to adopt laws which criminalise violence against women; underlines in this context the importance of putting an end to impunity by guaranteeing accountability and bringing perpetrators of sexual violence to justice.

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Instructs its President to forward these recommendations to the co-presidency of the Union for the Mediterranean, the Secretary-General of the UfM, the League of Arab States, the Council of Ministers of the European Union, the High Representative/ Vice-President Catherine Ashton, the European Commission, the parliaments and governments members of the Union for the Mediterranean and the European Parliament.
