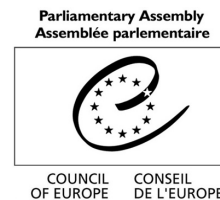


Parliamentary Assembly Assemblée parlementaire



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Draft Solemn Declaration by the Parliamentary Assembly on "Parliaments united in combating domestic violence against women"

submitted for adoption by the Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe meeting in San Marino on 17 November 2006, presented by Ms Ruth-Gaby Vermot-Mangold (Switzerland, SOC) and approved by the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

1. Domestic violence against women is a serious assault on women's dignity which no Council of Europe member state should tolerate.
2. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, committed to defending human rights, publicly and unequivocally condemns domestic violence. Such violence is the result of an unequal relationship between women and men which it also perpetuates. Domestic violence is not geographically circumscribed, is not limited to certain age groups or linked to ethnic origin. It occurs in every kind of family relationship and in all social strata.
3. The cost of domestic violence to society is high. There is the personal and social cost for the women who live a terrible nightmare and who experience constant fear and anxiety. In addition, there is the huge financial cost to society in general, which shoulders the burden of health care, protection, legal and policing costs. And there is a political cost when democratic societies are incapable of protecting women from domestic violence which is a frontal attack on their physical integrity and their human dignity.
4. The Parliamentary Assembly is convinced that combating domestic violence against women will help to build a fairer society where the fundamental rights of all, men and women alike, are respected.
5. In this context, the Parliamentary Assembly affirms that combating domestic violence against women must be a priority for member states. The Assembly calls upon the member states to assume fully their responsibilities and to take all necessary measures to end this violence. The Assembly pledges its support for, and will contribute to, the Council of Europe's campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence. The campaign will be launched in Madrid (Spain) on 27 November 2006. The Assembly reiterates its appeal to national parliaments to implement the project entitled "Parliaments united in combating domestic violence against women", to make the fight against domestic violence a priority theme of their work and thereby to contribute to the Council of Europe Campaign, by all parliamentary means at their disposal.