

ALL OF US – MOBILISING FOR ABORTION RIGHTS

Joint declaration of Members of the European Parliament

We, the undersigned, Members of the European Parliament, committed to the EU values of human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights, declare that:

ALL OF US believe that women can only be truly equal to men if they are given control over their sexuality, bodies and health.

ALL OF US are concerned about the recent developments and initiatives aimed at introducing regressive policies restricting women's access to safe and legal abortions;

ALL OF US note with great concern that 25 out of 28 EU member states today have progressive abortion laws but in spite of abortion being legal, access to abortion remains widely unavailable, through the abuse of conscientious objection or overly restrictive interpretations of existing limits;

ALL OF US believe that one year after the Spanish Government's attempt to restrict access to abortions and the successful opposition campaign leading to the withdrawal of the proposal, and at a time when women all over Europe continue their combat for the right to access to safe and legal abortions, it is necessary to mobilise support for rights and freedom of choice;

ALL OF US note that restrictive anti-choice initiatives originate almost exclusively in ultra-conservative religious organisations who prioritise religious beliefs over women's lives, reproductive choice, liberty and dignity;

ALL OF US want to see the need for an abortion being as low as possible and are convinced that the only way to reduce unwanted pregnancies, often leading to abortion, is through the provision of good quality sexuality education, the availability of modern contraception and respecting women's rights and free choice;

ALL OF US know that highly restrictive abortion regimes do not equate to lower abortion rates and that women have always had –and will continue to have- abortions;

ALL OF US do not look away from the truth that when women are denied access to abortion services, they will either travel to a place where safe and legal abortion is available, or procure an unsafe abortion;

ALL OF US recall that unsafe abortions are a significant cause of maternal mortality in developing countries and account for 16% of deaths, or 47,000 deaths each year, or more than 5 women per hour who die of unsafe abortions;

ALL OF US highly value the EU's commitment to spend approximately 100 million euro in EU development aid each year to protect maternal and reproductive health and rights, including funding safe abortion services in countries where abortion is legal;

ALL OF US want to secure women's sexual and reproductive health and rights within and outside the EU and not be hampered by anti-choice propaganda;

ALL OF US will work in the European Parliament and beyond to mobilise support for the right to access safe and legal abortion around the world.

SIGNATORIES:

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