



Attn: Ms. Mara Marinaki, Senior Advisor to the EEAS on gender and on the implementation of Resolution 1325

Purpose: The fulfilment of commitments made by the EU to eradicate violence against women and femicide in Europe and Latin America

Brussels, March 7, 2016

Dear Ms. Marinaki,

CIFCA¹ and Grupo Sur², the European civil society Networks who are signatories of this letter and working on relations between the European Union and Latin America, congratulate you on your recent appointment as Principal Advisor to the European Union External Action Service on Gender and on the implementation of Resolution 1325.

We are confident that your appointment will open up new opportunities to further strengthen the dialogue with civil society organisations working to achieve the effective enjoyment of women's rights both in Europe and beyond, and in our case, particularly in Latin America.

On March 8, International Women's Day, we would like to share with you a number of recommendations that the EU could consider to combat violence against women and girls and femicide in both regions.

At the **Second Summit of EU-CELAC Heads of State**, held last June in Brussels, the two regions pledged in their Action Plan 2015 - 2017 to join forces and take meaningful

¹ CIFCA is a network of European organisations and movements for human rights and development which carries out analysis and political advocacy with regards to the foreign policies of the EU with Central America and Mexico.

² Grupo Sur is a European network of NGOs working for the visibility, promotion and defence of human rights in the context of European Union - Latin America relations.

steps to guarantee a life free of violence for women and girls through the inclusion of **chapter 7 on gender issues**.

Our organisations welcome this initiative, however we are concerned about the lack of specifics in the chapter in terms of funding, specific activities, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and the participation of feminist and women's organisations in the implementation and monitoring of this chapter.

In both regions, violence against women and femicide is far from diminishing, and is in fact increasing, which is proven in figures: in France³, according to the Interior Ministry, 118 women died in 2014 at the hands of their partner or former partner. That is to say, in that country, one woman dies every three days at the hands of her partner. In Spain⁴, meanwhile, according to the organisation *femicidio.net*, during the first months of January and February 2016 alone, 18 femicides have been recorded.

In Latin America the situation is no better. In El Salvador⁵, femicide is the leading cause of death for women, and in Honduras⁶, according to the Centre for Women's Rights (*Centro de Derechos de Mujeres - CDM*) every 16 hours a woman is murdered, with the aggravating circumstance that, of the cases reported, only 1% is sentenced.

In light of the above, our organisations recommend the following concrete actions that will enable the implementation of **Chapter 7 of the EU-CELAC Action Plan 2015-2017**, as well as the **fulfilment of the commitments made by the EU** to eradicate violence against women, girls and femicide, both in Europe and in Latin America:

- **Finalise the planning** for the implementation of Chapter 7 of the EU-CELAC Action Plan 2015- 2017, translating it into concrete actions, with a specific budget and with monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- Open up spaces for the **participation of women's and feminist organisations** from the two regions, so that the process and its implementation can be enriched thanks to their considerable expertise and accumulated knowledge.
- Promote the creation of the **bi-regional intergovernmental working group** aimed at defining common objectives specifically on the elimination of all forms of

³ French Interior Ministry statement of 10 June 2015, "*Morts violentes au sein du couple : 118 femmes décédées en 2014*" (<http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Actualites/Communiqués/Morts-violentes-au-sein-du-couple-118-femmes-decedees-en-2014>)

⁴ *Femicidio.net* (www.femicidio.net). Last viewed on 26.02.16 (<http://www.femicidio.net/articulo/listado-femicidios-y-otros-asesinatos-mujeres-cometidos-hombres-espa%C3%B1a-2016>)

⁵ Observatory on violence against women (*Observatorio de violencia contra las mujeres*), *Manifiesto 30 aniversario de ORMUSA, hacia el pleno reconocimiento de los derechos de las mujeres*. 7 July, 2015 (http://observatoriodeviolencia.ormusa.org/boletinas/2015-07_BOLETINA_VG.pdf)

⁶ Observatory on violence in Honduras (*Observatorio de la Violencia en Honduras*), *Informe Especial de Muerte de Mujeres, Boletín No. 8*, bulletin gathering information from January to December 2013. Tegucigalpa, Honduras: IUDPAS - ©- UNAH, June 2014 (<http://iudpas.org/boletines/unidad-de-genero>)

violence against women and girls included in Chapter 7 of the EU-CELAC Action Plan 2015-2017.

- Include the fight against femicide and the end of impunity as a priority in **development cooperation and in bilateral and regional political dialogue**, in particular with regards to measures for prevention, access to effective justice, reparation for damages, and guarantees of non-repetition.
- Promote the signing and ratification of the **Istanbul Convention** by EU Member States and urge Latin American states to ratify the **CEDAW protocol**.
- Assess the implementation of the **European guidelines** on violence against women and girls in EU foreign policy.
- Dedicate a budget to the development of **uniform protocols** for the collection of information and the establishment of comparable data banks, prepared together with organisations working in this field.

We hope you find our considerations and recommendations useful and we wish you a successful start in your new position.

We remain at your disposal for future exchanges,

Sincerely



Marta Ibero

Executive Secretary, CIFCA



Erika González

Brussels Officer, Grupo Sur