

Standing Committee

Involvement of men – a crucial factor for change to combat violence against women

**International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November 2007)**

***DECLARATION***

presented by Ms Gülsün Bilgehan, Chairperson of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, for adoption by the Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Bratislava, 23 November 2007)

Violence against women, including domestic violence, is a serious violation of human rights affecting all social milieus and every European country.

The Parliamentary Assembly, which is running the parliamentary dimension of the Council of Europe campaign “Stop domestic violence against women” (2006-2008), is determined to pursue its action against this assault on human dignity. It calls on national parliaments to establish a legal framework which ensures that victims are protected, perpetrators prosecuted and action taken to prevent the evil.

Combating violence against women also requires a radical change in attitudes in Europe and combined action by the whole of society. In this context the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly is convinced that involvement of men – who are still in the majority in decision-making spheres – is a crucial factor for change to combat violence against women, promote gender equality and build a fairer society that respects fundamental rights.

The Assembly therefore calls on national parliaments to join “Combating violence against women: men get involved”, its pan-European parliamentary initiative to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November 2007).

In particular it urges national parliaments to set up networks of male MPs in Parliament and take action to raise men’s awareness and educate boys.

It also encourages national parliaments to pursue their support for the Council of Europe campaign until June 2008 and reinforce law on violence against women, in line with PACE Resolution 1582 (2007) adopted on 5 October 2007.