



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE
الجمعية البرلمانية للبحر الأبيض المتوسط
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PAM INAUGURATES UN OBSERVER STATUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Hon. Askin Asan, Head of the Turkish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), has paved the way for PAM's role at the United Nations, since the former was granted the Observer Status to the UN General Assembly in December 2009.

The Turkish parliamentarian represented PAM at the 54th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, and at the IPU-UN parliamentary event entitled "The role of parliaments in enforcing gender equality and women's rights, 15 years after Beijing". Ms. Asan is the Rapporteur for the PAM Special Task Force on Gender and Equality Issues.

"It is a great honor for me to be PAM's first official delegate to participate at a UN event. It also invests me with a sense of deep responsibility both towards my country and the citizens of the Mediterranean region as a whole. This is what PAM stands for". Hon. Asan commented.

The Observer Status at the UNGA represents for PAM a further opportunity to keep the international community focused also on the regional dimension of the wider geopolitical strategies of world parliamentary diplomacy. This is required in order to step up the process for the achievement of a world order for the benefit of all stakeholders which has to start at a local and regional level. //

(Speech by Hon. Asan follows)

For further information please contact:

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Hon. Askin Asan (Turkey)

Head of the Turkish Delegation to PAM

The IPU-UNDAW Parliamentary Meeting on the Role of Parliaments in Enforcing
Gender Eand Women's Rights, 15 years after Beijing.

2 March 2010

New York, USA

Check against delivery

Mr/Mrs. Chairperson

I wish to thank you for giving me opportunity to speak about increasingly important role that PAM plays in the region for enforcing gender equality and women's right.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean represents an excellent expression of regional parliamentary diplomacy and provides the Mediterranean region with a unique forum that brings together, on an equal footing, the National Parliaments of the Mediterranean littoral states.

PAM was established at 2006. Now in its fourth year, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean has made great steps in bringing the people of the basin together through the use of dialogue. Gender equality has been on the agenda of PAM since its establishment.

Today there are more women in government than ever before. The proportion of women in national assemblies has increased. Yet even at the current rate of increase, developing countries will not reach the 'parity zone' where neither sex holds more than 60% of seats until 2045.

Unfortunately, as of February 2010, none of the Mediterranean countries had met the target of at least 30 percent representation by women in parliament, which was set by the United Nations

Economic and Social Council in 1990. Furthermore, it is regrettable that PAM Member States rank below the world average with respect to female representation in parliamentary assemblies.

Gender inequalities persist on both sides of the Mediterranean, albeit to a different degree and extent. In Europe side, the situation of women has made impressive progress over the last 20 years. But even here much still remains to be done, particularly as regards women's access to the decision-making process and the persisting wage gap.

There are three areas in which the partnership within Mediterranean states can make a notable change: women's rights, migration, and violence against women. I consider women's networking to be a very important means of influencing decision-making. PAM has a crucial role to play in strengthening contacts and exchanges between women leaders from the business, non-governmental and political worlds in the region.

Within the Mediterranean Partnership we shall move from compartmental and isolated activities in favour of gender equality to an integrated approach. It will provide an operational framework for common action to fight discrimination against women and strengthen their role in the political, social, economic, educational and cultural spheres, and will guide the mobilization of funds for gender equality.

The tasks ahead of us are challenging but, when faced together, they are by no means insurmountable. It is a common responsibility for all of us: governments and civil societies of the whole region. I regard our meetings as a step towards closing the gap between policy and practice. I hope the opportunity will be seized to ensure that the Mediterranean Partnership makes a real and tangible contribution to the advancement of women's rights and gender equality in the region.

Thank you very much.