



Federation for Women
and Family Planning

www.federa.org.pl



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Edite Estrela
Member of European Parliament
Parlement européen
Bât. Altiero Spinelli
14G305
60, rue Wiertz
B-1047 Bruxelles

Copy to:
Mikael Gustafsson
Chair of FEMM Committee

Dear Madam,

on behalf of the Federation for Women and Family Planning from Poland, serving as ASTRA Network Secretariat, I would like to express our support for your efforts aimed at introducing a Resolution on sexual and reproductive health and rights in the European Parliament. Organizations fighting for women's human rights in Central and Eastern Europe have been following the proceedings very closely and we were very happy about the result in FEMM Committee which supported the SRHR Report. We were equally shocked by the events of 22 October plenary when extreme right deputies tried to block the voting on this document and obstructed the proceedings in a disgraceful manner.

We were not surprised to see Polish MEPs involved in these anti-choice activities. Poland is unfortunately in the forefront of anti-choice lobbying with Roman Catholic bishops concentrating all their efforts on limiting or stopping the slow progress in the field of gender equality, LGBTQ rights and sexual and reproductive rights. Only a few weeks ago the conservative forces had tried to further limit Poland's already restrictive abortion laws and force women to give birth to children which would die a few days or weeks after birth due to fatal genetic defects, denying them an option to have an abortion. Similar attempts can be observed in Lithuania.

The Federation is one of the few NGOs in Poland working on pro-choice issues, we struggle every day with heavy criticism, opposition threats and verbal attacks as well as insufficient funding. We do it because we know the realities of Polish women and terrible injustice they suffer as a result of



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restrictive or limited legislation on sexual and reproductive health. That is why initiatives such as your SRHR resolution are so important to us – even though they are non-binding they set a general tone of respect for human rights of women and give us hope that we will have better national laws in the future too, so that our citizens would not have to travel abroad in order to access the SRH services they need.

Dear Madam, we are grateful for your work in the field of sexual and reproductive rights and we hope that the resolution will finally be passed in the Parliament. This is only right in the context of the 20 year review ICPD commitments. Should you need any help from us in the process do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Krystyna Kacpura

Executive Director

**Federation for Women and Family Planning/
ASTRA Network Secretariat**