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EIN-A4

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EIN Seminar on The role of women in democracy building and socio-economic development in Mediterranean, European Parliament, Brussels

Introduction:

- **Paulo RANGEL MEP**, *EIN Chairman, Vice-Chair of the EPP Group in the EP responsible for Political Strategy and the European Ideas Network*

Chair:

- **Mariya GABRIEL MEP**, *Vice-Chairman of the EPP Group in the EP responsible for the Working Group on Mediterranean Union, Euromed, Head of the Bulgarian EPP Delegation*

Speakers:

- **Yasmina BADDOU**, *Former Prime Minister and Co-Chair of the Morocco-EU Joint Parliamentary committee*
- **Miriam IBANEZ**, *NEAR B2, Regional Programmes Neighbourhood South, European Commission*

- Keeping in mind that the Morocco situation is an exception in the region, notwithstanding the “Arab spring” most countries kept women’s social and economic conditions much as they were in the past. Even in Morocco there are still areas excluded for women.
- The European Parliament has an enormous task controlling the enforcement of the agreements established concerning gender equality, under the Barcelona Declaration and the European Neighbourhood Policy. The programmes already spent 45 million euros in the region. In Syria, for instance, women received training in media skills in order to know how «to get their voices heard». These investments require the fulfilling of specific goals and the publication of an annual report.
- Regardless the common traces of Maghreb and Mashreq countries, there are still tremendous development differences between those countries making it impossible to apply a “one-size-fits-all” solution. The process may be enhanced by promoting the access to education by women. The future wives and mothers will bequeath to the generations to come a message of modernity, of openness and tolerance. Both speakers agreed that men might not be part of the problem while are definitely part of the solution.
- Strengthen women’s role in the society have positive effects both on the economies of those countries and promoting democratic behaviour. Women are the vector of change, the change those countries need definitely to step modernity, and the political will to do it shall not be refrained.
- The seminar that focused on the developments of women rights both politically and economically in the Mediterranean region. The interventions were of utmost importance to understand the «cultural revolution» that took place in Morocco in the last decades and the fundamental role of the European Union promoting women’s condition in Mediterranean societies.

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