

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS COMMITTEE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE UfM



The meeting was opened by Ms. Leila Chettaoui, President of the Committee. There was a common agreement on the need to monitor progress on gender equality and to follow on UfM commitments in the field of strengthening the role of women in society. Emphasis was put on regional cooperation's role as a strategic way to align and coordinate member States' national policies with regional needs and most urgent development priorities. The meeting's conclusions were as follows:

### *On the Political level*

- Strengthening the participation of women in politics and business is the guarantee of peace and living together in the Mediterranean.
- There is a lack of implementation of policies in the field of gender equality.
- Relying on the quota system in electoral law is still necessary in the Southern and Northern Mediterranean countries as an essential measure to ensure a minimum representation of women in parliaments. However, the "quotas" system needs to be improved. It is a temporary measure that needs to be consolidated and complemented by a real political will to promote women's participation in government and in decision-making bodies - Achieving a balance between law enforcement means and a real political will.
- The relationship between men and women is not a war but rather a relationship of cooperation and fair competition.

- A strong need for a spontaneous female solidarity: women leaders should lead by example and commit themselves to this cause.
- The root causes of radicalization are poverty and ignorance within most vulnerable communities and at their forefront, women in all family units.

### *On the Operational level*

- Working towards the establishment of a common Mediterranean charter on women participation with the engagement of national parliaments.
- Draft an advocacy letter for UfM national parliaments and political parties toward reaching the critical threshold the 1/3 female political representation, as a subsequent way to achieving parity between women and men in politics.
- The need is not only to make more efforts into new actions but reinforcing and consolidating existing projects and initiatives while measuring their impact.
- The PA-UfM should further lend political support to UfM Secretariat's projects in the field of gender equality and women empowerment. Deputies could play a key role in the mobilisation of local actors.
- The need to pay particular attention to migrant and refugee women who tremendously suffer from losing their homes and countries. They play a central role in the education of their children. Strengthening their role would contribute to a better integration of refugees and migrants in host countries. In this regard, the Committee would work in the coming meetings on more specific recommendations related to actions on the ground through its Working Group on Women and Migration.