

## Women's Right to Decide Over Their Own Body

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party convening in Warsaw, Poland on 1 to 3 December 2016:

### Recalling:

- the resolutions 'Safe and legal abortion in the EU' and 'Womens' entitlement over their own bodies', adopted at the ALDE Party Congresses in 2011 and 2008 respectively. In particular the call for legal abortion in all EU member states and easy access to public healthcare system, and for facts-based sex education without taboos, freely and openly available in all EU member states, in particular for young people, as the key effective prevention of unwanted pregnancies.

### Notes that:

- every year about 20 million illegal abortions are made all over the world, mostly in poor parts of the world;
- more than 70,000 of the deaths are a consequence of illegal/unsafe abortions;
- these procedures are often made late in the pregnancy, either made by the woman herself or by people without sufficient medical education;
- every year 15,000 women suffer from severe consequences like physical disabilities and infertility as a consequence of illegal abortions;
- the principle of informed free choice is essential to the long-term success of family planning programmes;
- some countries in the European Union are facing calls for legislation that would severely restrict or even prevent access to reproductive health services, including family planning and safe abortions;
- a ban on abortion, except when there is an immediate and undeniable threat to a woman's life, will mean that survivors of rape and incest will be forced to give birth. Doctors will refrain from performing vital pre-natal tests for fear of possible prosecution, and that miscarriages will be met not with care from a medical professional, but questions from a prosecutor;
- taboos and the lack of availability of measures of planned parenthood inter alia contraception leads to the rise of unplanned pregnancies, abortion and infectious diseases.

### Resolution:

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### Year and Congress:

Warsaw, Poland 2016

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## Considers that:

- the empowerment and autonomy of women, and improvements in their political, social, economic and health status, are essential to the achievement of sustainable development;
- sexual and reproductive rights rest on the recognition of the human rights of women's right to have control over and decide freely on matters related to their own bodies;
- sexual and reproductive health and rights are based on four separate notions, namely sexual health, sexual rights, reproductive rights and reproductive health, within the framework of human rights;
- it is crucial for liberals to fight for the right of individuals to take autonomous decisions over their own sexual and reproductive health rights;
- forcing women to procure illegal abortions jeopardises women's health and potentially threatens their lives;
- forcing victims of rape and incest to carry pregnancies to term is an assault on their autonomy and dignity, and jeopardises their mental and physical health;
- criminalising abortions in circumstances where the pregnancy is likely to result in death is an unacceptable violation of reproductive health.

## Calls on:

- ALDE member parties to actively work to uphold the principle that the human rights of girls and women are an inalienable and indivisible part of human rights, to be protected not only in areas of public life but also in the privacy of the home;
- ALDE member parties to act when women's rights, including those related to sexual and reproductive health, are threatened or violated;
- ALDE member parties to actively support sexual and reproductive health education and sexual and reproductive rights education, for both women and men, as a tool to enhance women's and girl's rights in this regard;
- member parties to recognise reproductive decision-making, including choice in marriage, family formation, and determination of the number, timing and spacing of one's children; and the right to the information and the safe and affordable means to exercise those choices;
- member parties to deal openly and forthrightly with unsafe abortion as a major public health concern.

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