



Mediterranean Feminist Forum

Report

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En partenariat
avec



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ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	Appropriate Communication Techniques for Development
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ATFD	Association Tunisienne des Femmes Démocrates
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIDDEF	Center for Information and Documentation on the Rights of Children and Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CWWV	Centre for Women War Victims
EFI	EuroMed Feminist Initiative
FMJ	Federacion de Mujeres Juvenes
FMP	Federacion de Mujeres Progressistas
HRDC	Human Rights in Democracy Center
KADAV	Kadınlarla Dayanışma Vakfı / Foundation of Solidarity with Women
LAC	Legal Aid Action
MARA-MED	Movement for Abortion Rights and Access
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
SWPM	Syrian Women Political Movement
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls
WSC	Women's Studies Center

I. THE FORUM BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Women's rights in the Mediterranean are currently at risk of regressing due to persistent armed conflicts, social and economic inequality and rise of conservatism. Several initiatives have been engaged to promote networking between feminist civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Mediterranean at different levels. At multilateral level, events have been organized notably by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) around issues such as female entrepreneurship, women economic empowerment, and the gender-climate nexus. At Euro-Mediterranean level, through the long-term investment and action of national and regional feminist organizations, notably EuroMed Feminist Initiative (EFI), who has been organising for many years now women's rights CSOs-led policy dialogues with stakeholders and legislators.

The first Mediterranean Feminist Forum was organised by the EuroMed Feminist Initiative, in partnership with the Interministerial Delegation for the Mediterranean of French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and with the contribution of the Arab World Institute in Paris, the French Development Agency, Wimbeetech and Campusna. It aimed to contribute to valorising and strengthening CSOs' networking from both sides of the Mediterranean and widening the space for cooperation and common action. The forum also strived to promote the actions initiated and implemented by women's rights organisations and support the diversification of the sources of their financing.

II. FORUM TOPICS AND PARTICIPANTS

DISCUSSION TOPICS

The forum was split in three sessions followed by open discussions, which provided space for over 50 participants from 16 countries to exchange analyses, experiences, lessons learned and good practices from both sides of the Mediterranean on the following themes:

- **Place, space and role of feminist CSOs in Mediterranean countries:** The status of women's rights and gender equality cannot be dissociated from the wider political, social, cultural, and economic trends. Civil society, in particular women's rights organisations, play a crucial role, which requires in priority the freedom of their speech and action. However, they are increasingly under attack and threat of losing their independence, and their work is further undermined by the lack of fundings and curtailing of civil liberties.
- **Lessons learned and identifying best practices in three thematic areas:** This session was split into three panels:
 - Comprehensive approach to combating violence against women and girls (VAWG)
 - Sexual and reproductive health and rights.

- Women's participation in economic, social and political life.
- **Ways and means of cooperation among feminist organizations in the Mediterranean:** Implementation of women and girls' rights requires political and budgetary commitment to support core programs and women's rights CSOs. That makes it even more important to further develop cooperation and networking among women's rights CSOs on the one hand and structural cooperation of CSOs with decision makers and stakeholders on the other hand. Collaboration among feminist movements according to context and broadening common feminist interventions in political, social, and economic life are crucial for improving the wellbeing of the societies.

PARTICIPANTS

The forum convened over 50 participants, including representatives of feminist organizations from diverse countries from the Mediterranean basin, ensuring that there is geographical balance between both shores, as well as different stakeholders, private sector and donors.

III. FORUM PROCEEDINGS

Opening session: Mediterranean region: Diverse contexts, shared challenges and commitment to promote and protect the universal human rights of women

The forum was opened by Ambassador, Inter-Ministerial Delegate for the Mediterranean, H.E. Karim Amellal, and the co-presidents of EuroMed Feminist Initiative Lilian Halls-French and Leila Al Ali.

In his welcoming remarks, **Ambassador Karim Amellal** shared information on France's feminist diplomatic policy, promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He indicated that France is investing, via the French Development Agency's Support fund for feminist organizations, 250 million euros for the period 2023 to 2027 to defend and promote the rights of women and girls, particularly in the Mediterranean, the Arab world and Africa. He stressed that the forum had a triple objective: first, to bring together CSOs to reflect and discuss the situation, consider common responses and solutions and create together the conditions for common initiatives.



Lilian Halls French stressed the importance of organizing this event which brought together women from both sides of the Mediterranean and makes their voices heard. She recalled that the EuroMed Feminist Initiative is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, and that over these two decades, through its diversity in terms of experiences, approaches, generations and culture, EFI has built a sustainable feminist space for speech, exploration and action nourished by the expertise of feminists but also by their commitments and hopes. She stated that women's freedom, their free choice, requests as absolute prerequisites access to education, resources, work and decision-making power. Through initiatives such as this forum, it is essential to make women's

experiences and demands heard in order to impose their place in decision-making bodies and positions of power, but also so that women are recognized as legitimate interlocutors by political leaders.

Leila Al Ali also described the importance of this forum at a time marked by the rise of armed conflicts and their tragic consequences for the peoples of the region and in particular women. EuroMed Feminist Initiative has worked to develop coordination mechanisms that recognize the universality of women's indivisible rights, but also the link between women's right to autonomy and the right of peoples to self-determination. Leila el Ali emphasized the impossibility of achieving social justice and equality in a context of armed conflict and occupation. She finally insisted on the urgency of implementing the principle of solving conflicts through political means, refusing armaments and military interventions as solution undertaken primarily to the detriment of the women of the world, and which subject people to genocidal massacres and ethnic cleansing as today in Gaza.

First Session: Place, space and role of feminist CSOs in Mediterranean countries: overview of the situation

This session provided an opportunity to examine current developments in the status of women's organisations in the region, particularly with regard to their freedom and independence of action. Moderated by Doris Awad, *Syria Gender Advocacy Group (GAG)*, the session benefited from the interventions of Houda Benbarek from *the Coalition for Empowerment and Equality - Israr, Morocco*, Azza Kamel from *Appropriate Communication Techniques for Development (ACT) Egypt*, Bianca Monteleone from *Obiezione Respinta, Italy* and Clémence Dumas from *Kadınlarla Dayanışma Vakfı (KADAV), Türkiye*. They shared their perception and analysis of the situation as well as their recommendations regarding this situation and the place and role of feminist civil society organisations in the Mediterranean region.

Doris Awad – Gender Advocacy Group introduced the panel pointing out that many feminist associations in the Euro-Mediterranean region are under serious attack and threatened with losing their autonomy.



Houda Benbarek - Israr, Morocco drew attention to the fact that the work of feminist organisations is hampered by acts of intimidation and restrictions on the flow of funding in certain countries of the region, and that journalists and people working in the media are also subject to pressure. She stressed the importance of influencing policies to bring about legislative change, giving the specific example of the reform of the Moudwana in Morocco, the personal status code governing family rights. Houda Benbarek shared examples of cooperation through the creation of feminist networks and coalitions with the support of other associations at transnational level. She described the media as a 'fourth power' that is essential for communication within the work of feminists in the Mediterranean region,

informing them about their respective actions and strengthening the creation and consolidation of networks. In her view, it is imperative to enhance coordination between civil society and stakeholders in order to promote initiatives aimed at increasing women's access to resources and to their rights, strengthening the role of women and taking action on the issue of gender equality in the region, in order to strengthen the legitimacy and credibility of feminist commitment.

Azza Kamel - ACT, Egypt, indicated that the challenges faced by feminist CSOs in the Euro-Mediterranean region hinder their ability to maintain the continuity of their work. These challenges are compounded by various methods of repression ranging from threats, intimidation and reprisals to travel bans, defamation and imprisonment. This deprives thousands of women of access to feminist associations and the support and assistance they need to protect themselves against violence and discrimination. According to Azza Kamel, authoritarian patriarchal regimes have quite often hijacked the women's liberation project and limited the possibility of enacting feminist reforms in Mediterranean countries. Feminist discourse, as well as demands and political activities have been instrumentalised to distance the feminist movement from its demands and means of action. In such a context, it has become necessary to reconsider empowerment programmes and assess their various aspects in terms of actually liberating women from cycles of violence and exploitation. The loss of independence of feminist organisations is also due, in her view, to both the reduction in freedoms and the lack of funding. In this sense, there is a decline in feminist work on global resistance against the patriarchal system, while some organisations are unable to access funding. She concluded by emphasizing that it was impossible to talk about women's rights and feminist networking in the Middle East without demanding an immediate end to the genocide under way in Gaza against an entire people. The Mediterranean countries are culturally different, but within each of them feminists are involved in building a fairer and more harmonious society and are a force for greater equality and justice.

Bianca Monteleone - Obiezione Respinta, Italy, underlined major challenges that feminist organisations in Italy have been facing in recent years linked to the resurgence of the conservative powers. The speaker pointed out that in these times of rolling back of acquired rights and rising conservatism, the feminist project is under attack from the reactionary and anti-abortion movement. The number of anti-abortion associations is multiplying, and their presence is intensifying in the media, on social networks and in institutional and political spheres. The influence of these anti-rights movements has increased significantly under the current government, whose policies support these conservative movements in order to marginalise the work of feminist associations. Bianca Monteleone gave concrete examples of anti-freedom associations, explicitly anti-abortion, which are also active in medical and social centres.

Anti-abortion and anti-gender media campaigns defaming the alleged dangers of medical abortion are on the rise and justify the introduction of family natal policies and conservative propaganda. These associations received major support from the head of government, the Pope and parliament. Against this backdrop, the Italian feminist movement is facing major challenges, despite its strong activism and other forms of public engagement. Access to the traditional media and the dissemination of the network's activities in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as the dissemination of awareness-raising campaigns in schools and universities, are increasingly difficult. Finally, the street as a space for expressing political commitments is becoming more restricted, with activists facing a resurgence of police repression that extends to the feminist movement.

Clémence Dumas – KADAV, Türkiye, explained that feminist organisations in Türkiye have taken part in legislative changes in favour of women's rights, taking advantage of the particular context of liberalisation in the early 2000s brought about by Türkiye's accession process to the European Union. The main and most recent reform in this direction took place in 2012 with the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, which was quickly followed by conservative political agendas. Since then, members of the government and religious leaders have repeatedly back-pedalled on the work done by the feminist movement, including attacks on the right to abortion since 2012, on the rights set out in the civil code, particularly on divorce and alimony, and finally with bills promising amnesty to perpetrators of sexual violence if they marry their victims. Civil society organisations and the women's movement have mobilised extensively against these attacks on acquired rights and have helped to prevent these backward steps. However, despite its strength of action, the women's movement has not been able to prevent Türkiye's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention in 2021 by presidential decree. She added that, like other countries in the region, Türkiye is facing an increase in femicide and gender-based violence, which has led to a growing sense of impunity for perpetrators. This reactionary turn by the government has also had a direct impact on civil society, particularly since the state of emergency declared in July 2016 after the coup attempt: all opposition voices face the risk of arrest and detention. Clémence Dumas concluded that there has been a serious deterioration in the rule of law in the country, as well as an increase in police violence and attacks on freedom of expression, particularly for members of civil society.

MAIN POINTS OF DISCUSSION

- ❖ It is essential to work on the internal and external challenges that feminist organisations are facing. Internal challenges that exist within each organisation and between the organisations themselves, include unethical competition. Challenges external to the organisations include intimidation by the authorities, restrictions on political and grassroots work and obstacles to accessing funding.
- ❖ The importance of restoring people's trust in the mandates and international mechanisms of the United Nations was also raised. The events in Gaza have brought to light that the credibility of these international mechanisms is increasingly being called into question. The women's movement must make them as part of its strategies to restore trust in these mechanisms.
- ❖ In light of the internal challenges, the militarisation of regimes is also a problem. A great number of countries in the Mediterranean basin have become “police States”, which creates a major obstacle to the emergence of women's rights issues.
- ❖ It is vital today to cultivate feminist solidarity and sisterhood in the Mediterranean basin, where it has diminished over the years.
- ❖ There are organisations and networks that have developed programmes to counter violent extremism, which targets young girls and women in particular and their cooperation is essential.
- ❖ The open discussion ended with a reference to the need to denounce the unequal balance of power in all the components of the democratic movement. The question of women always comes at the end of even the most progressive agendas, even though women make up half of humanity; it is essential that this dimension be taken into account.

CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ Improving and strengthening the capacity and therefore the effectiveness of organisations is essential to address internal challenges. Introducing internal policies, building capacities and equipping organisations with knowledge is an ongoing process.
- ❖ Capacity-building, support and the development of tools must meet the need to combat harassment and intimidation.
- ❖ The younger generations need to develop important skills because feminist discourse needs culture and knowledge.
- ❖ The actions towards democracy building should be linked with the status of women's rights and equality in each country.

- ❖ International links must be forged in order to open up channels of international communication on both sides of the Mediterranean. It is important to converge the action of the feminist movement with for example the labour movement, in order to mobilise around common issues in different countries.
- ❖ Long-term strategies need to be redefined, but that can be complicated for feminist organisations as they often have no choice but to focus on emergencies linked to attacks and threats to acquired rights and to lack of funding.
- ❖ Networking and cooperation are needed to both to overcome external challenges and to deal with the problems of lack of access to funding.
- ❖ More projects empowering women are needed so that women become real agents of social change in their countries.
- ❖ Strengthening leadership and resilience and working together are needed to claim funding to secure women rights.
- ❖ Working on the right of assembly and freedom of expression is essential to ensure the protection of all rights and support the demand for equality and justice.
- ❖ Strengthening feminists' capacities on how to respond to the press, how to use social networks and communications tools is instrumental to resist repression, preserve the gains and overcome challenges as organisations.
- ❖ Relations with all democratic movements working for social justice and peace, (anti-militarist, trade unions and workers 'movements) is essential for preserving and advancing women's rights.

Second Session: Combating violence against women and girls: Lessons learned and identifying best practices in three thematic areas

Panel-1: Comprehensive approach to combating violence against women and girls (VAWG)

VAWG is one of the most pressing issues throughout the world. In the Euro-Mediterranean region while women in some countries are more affected because of the combination of discriminative laws and poor prevention and protection mechanisms, shared challenges for the whole region feature broad social tolerance towards VAWG, cultural stereotypes, impunity for perpetrators, and putting the social stigma and blame on the victims. Although there are some improvements on policy level, VAWG remains still widespread and there are still countries with no specific legislation. The complex nature of VAWG requires

a multi-sectorial approach and coordinated action among all stakeholders. To improve the situation in these regards, it is essential to continue the ongoing work in the Euro-Med region in addressing shared challenges while taking in account specific priorities of each national context.



This panel moderated by **Mirjana Kucer – Domine, Croatia**, discussed priorities and strategies in the Euro-Mediterranean region towards zero tolerance of VAW through education, awareness raising and advocacy. Panellists *Monia Kari from ASWAT NISSA, Tunisia*, *Nadia Ait Zai from the Center for Information and Documentation on the Rights of Children and Women (CIDDEF), Algeria*, *Zoya Rohana from KAFA, Lebanon*, and *Aferdita Prroni from Human Rights in Democracy Center (HRDC), Albania*, shared lessons learned and best practices in advocating for the amendment of discriminatory laws, the implementation of equitable legislation and structural change towards a comprehensive approach to VAW in the region.

Monia Kari - ASWAT NISSA, Tunisia, presented the Tunisian experience of combating VAWG through the example of the Tunisian Democrat Women’s Association (AFTD), which was the first to open a listening, counselling and care centre for women survivors of violence, and created a network of 22 associations to demand a law to combat violence against women. This network succeeded in its advocacy work, building on the over 20 years long struggle of the feminists in the country, as a comprehensive law to combat violence against women was adopted on 26 July 2017 and has four pillars: prevention, protection, care and criminalisation. Ms Kari went on to say that the work of civil society does not stop at the existence of this bill, but only after its application and the shortcomings identified by a network of civil society associations. Femicide has also become an increasingly widespread phenomenon in Tunisian society. Feminist associations have taken to the streets to denounce the murders of women. They organise

symbolic funerals and have conducted studies about this phenomenon. She added that it was civil society that gave media coverage to femicide, without which it would have been totally invisible, all this in the complete silence of the concerned authorities and demanded a national plan to put an end to femicide.

She concluded that the demands included specific funding and a prevention policy at ministerial level. The feminist movement in Tunisia today plays the role of the opposition and, together with other components of civil society, is fighting against the populist discourse and the dictatorship tendencies that prevails in the country. Today, security depends on the voice of women, who must all unite for women's rights and against violence against women.

Nadia Ait Zai - CIDDEF, Algeria reminded that violence against women became visible in the 1990s. Physical assaults and acid attacks in the street were on the rise, and this alerted the feminist movement to be vocal about domestic and marital violence. This made it possible to start talking about domestic violence; until then it had been hidden because it was supposedly a “private” matter. Feminist movement advocated that this violence must be made public, because the State must protect rights and people, especially women. Due to this struggle, in 2005, the Family Code was amended: the duty of obedience and the notion of head of the family were abolished. In 2006, a survey revealed that one woman in seven had faced violence in Algeria, and this was followed by the introduction of a national strategy to combat violence. In 2015, again in the wake of the work of the feminist movement, the penal code criminalised different forms of violence against women.

Initiatives have been taken, notably by the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family Affairs and the Status of Women to combat violence, with the creation of a database with the support of UN Women, namely a system called Amane which collects statistics on violence with the aim of ensuring better support and identifying needs. The figures are important, but those that do exist are scattered. According to Nadia Ait Zai, it would therefore be appropriate to bring different sources together and entrust them to a single independent body so that the fact of violence against women becomes visible in Algeria and elsewhere. In 2020, Algeria enshrined women's fundamental rights in the Constitution, and in particular the protection of women against violence. This was an important step for Algerian feminists, as the terms “women” and “victims” now appear, as do the three spheres of public, private and professional life.

Zoya Rohana - KAFA, Lebanon, emphasized that KAFA has been working on a law to protect women and children from domestic violence in Lebanon so that the State would recognise the problem of VAWG. Kafa is part of a national coalition to enshrine the protection of women and children from domestic violence in legislation. After 13 years of advocacy, campaigning and networking with civil society actors, and

following a public rally attended by 5,000 demonstrators, women in Lebanon finally obtained a law by parliament in April 2014. Feminist movement continue to work towards changing mentalities, structures and patriarchal roles. Lebanese lawyers have also been working on a new mechanism to combat domestic violence. The best practices identified by the speaker include advocacy at national level to demand comprehensive laws on all forms of violence in times of peace and war. In particular, she gave the example of two national conferences that were organised with the participation of 22 organisations from 14 Arab countries to draft a modern law on violence against women and girls. This draft law in Lebanon included the participation and reflections of the whole of civil society and was presented to parliament and adopted on 18th March 2024.

Zoya Rohana concluded by saying that what has made these experiences possible in Lebanon is the struggle and that women's rights are interconnected at national, regional and international level. The situation in Gaza demonstrates the interrelationship between the rights to justice, democracy and dignity is rooted in racism and colonialism.

Aferdita Prroni - HRDC, Albania described the situation in Albania, which was the last country in Europe to pass in 2005 a specific law on violence against women. Violence is completely concealed by both the State and society. Albanian feminists are working on drafting an anti-discrimination law and implementing the mechanisms established by the law. These mechanisms meet the needs of victims and exist in each municipality in Albania, but feminist organisations must be particularly active in putting these mechanisms into practice, because the State does not act upon it. HRDC has been hearing the judiciary since 2012 and has drawn up reports in collaboration with regional bodies.

According to Aferdita Prroni, only 2% of victims are assisted by the State, while all the others are supported by associations or lawyers. She finally stressed the importance of networking to act as a pressure group on governments and remind them of their international commitments. Working on strategies is important as a tool for providing information on the real situation of women's rights, human rights and violence.

MAIN POINTS OF DISCUSSION

- ❖ The elimination of violence against women and girls is linked to addressing all the elements that feed patriarchy. 20 years on from the Spanish laws, 10 years on from the Istanbul Convention, having witnessed “Me Too” movement, international women's strikes: the struggle is intensifying but feminists have not yet had the opportunity to measure the impact of these strategies.

- ❖ Laws are important. However, achieving their implementation is an ongoing work. The organisations and the society need to put in place strategies to monitor the implementation of existing laws against violence against women.
- ❖ It is a step forward that constitutions address VAWG, but there is a need for specific and comprehensive laws on VAWG, that defines VAWG and criminalise all its forms, with measures ranging from prevention to criminal prosecution, to fines, to protection and assistance for victims.
- ❖ All countries, even those with no laws on VAWG, have strategies on combating VAWG, but they are not legally binding. We need to link these strategies to combat violence with the need of a comprehensive legislation combating it.
- ❖ Policy makers need VAWG data to enable informed decisions and to monitor trends. Information spreading on service provisions is important for victims as well as for raising awareness of the whole society.
- ❖ Today there are doubts about the possibility of applying international conventions. The conservative forces have cast doubt on the credibility of feminists when it comes to women's rights and human rights. We need international solidarity on these issues, just as in Gaza.
- ❖ Violence against women cannot be tackled without addressing the responsibility of the perpetrators and the responsibility of the society towards them.

CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ Even with best laws, mechanisms and strategies, if there is no political will to act, if the laws are not applied, all efforts remain in vain. The feminist organisations need to be considered as preferential interlocutors and partners by the policy makers and public authorities, because they are most often the first facing the victims of VAWG.
- ❖ A comprehensive and specific law must be adopted in each country, where VAWG must be defined, all its forms must be criminalized, and perpetrators prosecuted and punished. Combating VAWG needs prevention actions on State level, while victims need protection and compensation.
- ❖ Feminist organisations need to work together at national level and maintain policy dialogues with relevant authorities and decision makers on implementation of laws, to make governments accountable.
- ❖ There is a need of solidarity at national and international levels to develop common approaches, but also to monitor and evaluate the application of the different laws, and exchange the analyses, and best practices.

- ❖ For a zero-tolerance strategy towards VAWG there is a need of solidarity at national and international levels to exchange analyses and best practices, to develop common approaches, to monitor and evaluate the application of the different laws, to apply a survivor-centred approach and follow-up with survivors so they are accurately supported.
- ❖ The fights against VAWG requires not only emergency solutions for victims and survivors, but also action to change attitudes through preventives measures and education. This means tackling the nature of gender-based discrimination and raising awareness on rights.
- ❖ The priorities of the women's movement at national and Euro-Mediterranean levels are to find ways of setting up one-stop mechanisms involving all the relevant stakeholders, from the police, public prosecutors, and social services, so that women do not get lost in the maze of procedures that can take months when they could be dealt within a day.
- ❖ Surveys should be carried out, a guarantee fund for survivors of VAWG should be set up, all legislation should be applied, training for magistrates and lawyers in relation to survivors should be developed, and a global law should be passed at both national and Mediterranean level establishing a charter of rights and protection for survivors.
- ❖ Advocating for protection mechanisms such as protection and restraining orders is key. Judges should no longer have to look in the code of criminal procedure to find out what can be used to obtain a restraining order.
- ❖ Assistance for survivors and their families at all stages of the criminal justice process should be established with reference to the 1985 United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, that should include: a) The right to assistance and care, Informing victims of the scope, timing and progress of the proceedings, b) Harmonising databases using an inter-sectorial approach, given the scattered nature of the data, c) Adopting national strategies to combat VAWG and the creating of emergency reception centres, d) Training judges and lawyers to deal with survivors.

Panel - 2: Sexual and reproductive health and rights

Even if the situation of sexual and reproductive rights in the Euro-Mediterranean region has witnessed some progress and advances, it remains quite worrying and women's rights organisations are fighting back regression to preserve the hardly won gains. This session examined the main causes of this backlash for the sexual and reproductive rights and proposed concrete steps to counteract it.

The Panellists, Dr. Isabel Stabile from *Doctors for Choice, Malta*, Nela Pamukovic from *Centre for Women War Victims (CWWV), Croatia*, Selma Hajri from *Tawhida ben Cheikh and the network Movement for*

Abortion Rights and Access (MARA-MED), Tunisia, Raquel Pérez Benasco from Federacion de Mujeres Juvenes (FMJ), Spain, examined the main causes of the decline observed, shared their analyses and made concrete proposals for mobilization to preserve the gains in sexual and reproductive rights in the Euro-Med region.

The moderator Ghada Jabbour - Kafa, Lebanon, introduced the situation regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights, pointing out that this issue has begun to emerge as a concern for public policy, even though it still faces major problems in the Mediterranean region. She pointed out that women's rights organisations face the fear and threat of losing their gains, particularly in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights, and that they have had to focus their efforts on addressing this setback.

Nela Pamukovic - CWWV, Croatia gave a chronology of the right to abortion in Croatia, where it has been legal since 1952. Croatia had a real policy in favour of equality between men and women and the right of women to their bodies. There has been a law in place since 1978, called the *Law on measures to help women exercise their right to freely dispose of their bodies*. However, since 1991, when Croatia became independent, politicians began to control and limit women's rights to make choices about their sexuality and abortion. While 75% of the population are in favour of abortion, since the 2000s, Croatia has witnessed an emergence of conservative and religious groups trying to ban it.

Nela Pamukovic pointed out a number of obstacles that have existed since 1991, including the fact that abortion is not free and costs around 400 euros. Furthermore, in private clinics, women are obliged to register their pregnancy. Moreover, a 2003 law allows staff to refuse abortions as conscientious objectors. In six Croatian towns, there are no gynaecologists available to perform abortions, and 60% of gynaecologists are conscientious objectors.

Lastly, the emergence of anti-abortion movements, whose efforts have intensified since 2013, particularly since the constitutional referendum limiting the definition of marriage to a union between a man and a woman, has been accompanied by an increase in the number of 'Pro-life' associations organising numerous conferences. These organisations represent a major problem because they are very repressive and campaign under the aegis of the Catholic Church.



Raquel Pérez Benasco - FMJ, Spain pointed out that the last three years have been particularly important for guaranteeing sexual and reproductive rights in the area of gender equality and more specifically the right to abortion in Spain. She specified that for young people, abortion is probably one of the most important rights because it guarantees women's freedom and determines their educational, personal and professional plans.

The work undertaken since 2010 with a conceptual and practical framework specifies that abortion must be legal, safe and free so that every woman has access to abortion through the health system. These three concepts are at the heart of legislation on abortion and sexual and reproductive rights.

Between 2010 and 2019, there were attempts of backsliding, particularly at institutional level, which the women's movement widely contested, particularly through street protests. In February 2023, a law was passed allowing access to abortion services in the public health system from the age of 16, without the need for parental consent. According to Ms. Benasco, in some cases young girls' or women's decisions related to abortion are influenced by religion or tradition, due to the weight of society and beliefs. She added that today 80% of abortion procedures are carried out in the public sector. She concluded by saying that in Spain the feminist movement is very strong in terms of organisation and networking; it is also very well structured, and its results are very positive in terms of the quality of the policies of recent years. She underlined however the need for and importance of international solidarity of the diverse components of the feminist movement.

Selma Hajri – Tawhida ben Cheikh and MARA-MED, Tunisia underlined that in the Mediterranean, out of twenty countries, only ten allow abortion in certain situations, while the others ban it completely. Nearly 80% of women of childbearing age in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region face severe restrictions in terms of access to abortion and, more generally, sexual and reproductive rights, and 55%

live in countries where abortion is only authorised in cases where there is a risk of danger to women's lives. In countries where abortion is legal, this right is constantly challenged by political or religious opponents, as in Türkiye and Tunisia, despite laws that allow unrestricted abortion in all public clinics free of charge. Today, many women who decide to have an abortion face judgement from medical and paramedical staff, as well as from society at large.

According to Selma Hajri, there has been a real regression in sexual and reproductive health services. Surveys have shown that women no longer have access to abortion in public services, that they face difficulties that are sometimes insurmountable, and that the conditions of services are stigmatising and abusive, especially for young girls. Abortion is still legal, it is still available in the private sector, but in the public sector, sexual and reproductive health has become a truly subsidiary issue. Religion is used as an unstoppable argument, allowing unlimited restrictions on women's rights in a very powerful patriarchal environment. In political terms, the opposition is not interested in sexuality, sexual and reproductive rights or the right to abortion. This situation is not improving today, despite awareness-raising on the part of civil society. Yet abortion is an essential right for women, crystallising the right to bodily autonomy and the right to bodily freedom.

Isabel Stabile - Doctors for Choice, Malta outlined the situation in Malta, stating that together with being the smallest country in the European Union, it was the last to pass a law authorising abortion for the first time in June 2023. Every year, 500 women have an abortion in Malta, which is approximately the same proportion as in other countries. She pointed out that there are three levels of backlash in Malta: on women, on providers and on communities. She gave an alarming account of the conditions of women who are persecuted for having an abortion, and particularly the violence they suffer from their partners. Only a small group of doctors agree to carry out abortions, and today Malta is facing a growing anti-choice tendency. Since 2019, things have started to change, and doctors refer to the law even if they don't want to. According to Dr Isabel Stabile, in terms of society, the authorities are passing on the political message, there are billboards on which it is noted that abortion is charged, and civil society is trying to organise information sessions in the universities.

Finally, she concluded by pointing out that organisations associated with the extreme right are trying to overturn the law on abortion by relying on the discourse of the Church and that, as in some countries, the political parties are not interested in this issue and hide it from their discourses.

MAIN POINTS OF DISCUSSION

- ❖ The idea that medical abortion is dangerous is a question that was raised in the 1990s. There are around 10,000 research studies showing that the risks of the abortion pill are minimal. It's totally proven, there's no doubt about it, medical abortion is one of the safest procedures. It's potentially because it's safe, easy and free that abortion is not accepted.
- ❖ Health issues in general are now linked to financial resources, whereas they should be politically and economically in favour of women.
- ❖ The use of contraceptives and discussions around this issue are essential. A great deal of work remains to be done to explain the benefits of using them in the Arab region.
- ❖ Making people understand the usefulness of abortion and contraceptives, particularly in relation to rape, also remains a challenge.
- ❖ The idea of knowledge and how to use tools to create pressure in favour of abortion remain important. Some national agencies continue to give a religious, rather than a professional or legal, response on this point.
- ❖ In some countries, organizing one awareness-raising and information session on the issue of abortion, puts organisations at risk of being prosecuted or imprisoned. Once pioneering structures on maternal and child protection have now completely disappeared. Moreover, there is now a ban on therapeutic abortion in the private sector.
- ❖ Ten years ago, the Turkish government tried to change the law on abortion. They failed thanks to the mobilisation of women, but there is still pressure on doctors not to carry out abortions. Women are therefore turning to the private sector, which charges a fee. It can be said then that what is legal in theory is not always legal in practice.
- ❖ In Syria, in the context of armed conflict and displacement, reproduction is becoming a form of resistance to genocide. Women, especially those in camps, must have children because it is a form of resistance to death and murder.

CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ Pressure tactics need to be discussed and elaborated on using efficiently international mechanisms.
- ❖ Medical abortion is safe, and the feminist movement needs to work on the value system to counteract the rise to false information and preconceived ideas about abortion.

- ❖ Women's rights advocates need to work to banish the stigma attached to abortion and sexual and reproductive rights and ensure that the concept used to pass a law on abortion is used throughout education.
- ❖ To advance sexual and reproductive rights, feminist organisations need to discuss and share experiences and expectations together. This can be done on the level of countries or regions, as well as on the level of the Mediterranean region, as with this forum.
- ❖ Women's rights defenders need to elaborate strategies on how to use international mechanisms to resist and how to organise solidarity, in this context of backlash and the rise of fundamentalisms, as well as in the face of conservative movements that are financially powerful and receive large grants, such as those from the Catholic Church.
- ❖ Advocacy toward policies that fund women's rights is of utmost importance so that women's rights organisations achieve their objectives in ensuring access and control of these rights.
- ❖ A feminist approach is essential to defend sexual and reproductive rights and the right to abortion that brings together regions, countries and even organisations.
- ❖ More networking and dialogue are needed to encourage the creation and sharing of knowledge, good practices and exchanges of experience, and build awareness and a strong voice in defence of sexual and reproductive rights and abortion right.

Panel-3: Women's participation in economic and political life

This panel featured Sabiha Khalil from *Syrian Women Political Movement (SWPM), Syria*, Sama Owaida from *Women's Studies Centre (WSC), Palestine*, Rosa San Segundo from *Federacion de Mujeres Progressistas (FMP), Spain*, and Fawzia Baba-Aissa, Member of the *Steering Committee of the Support Fund for Feminist Organizations, supported by the French Development Agency (AFD)*.

Moderated by Azza Kamel, the panel focused on the measures needed to strengthen women's participation in economic and political life in order to foster a just and gender-sensitive transition, which has the potential to create decent and sustainable jobs for women by working for their equal access to power and resources, challenging patriarchal systems, and actively contributing to the transformation of social norms and power relations between women and men.



Sabiha Khalil – SWPM, Syria, stressed that the Syrian women's political movement was born in an oppressive country, where freedoms are suppressed, and women's political participation is blocked. That said, Syrian feminists believe in feminist action as political action. Sabiha Khalil explained that within their movement, politics have been placed before feminism in order to make Syrian male society understand their conditions as political women. As a feminist political movement, they believe in a pluralist Syria that belongs to all, without discrimination on any ethnic, gender or religious basis, and that the democracy to which Syrians aspire cannot be built without women and without the respect of their rights. She added that if women want to bring about change, they must take political

action and build alliances with those who share their principles. Work is currently underway on the Syrian constitution under the aegis of the United Nations. In her view, laws that discriminate against women must be abolished, and mechanisms to protect women must be established regardless of the religious context.

She concluded by saying that today in Syria, women are being killed in the name of honour, and that in their movement since 2018, they have been consulting Syrian women on political issues to propose political projects from their perspective as women.

Sama Owaida - WSC, Palestine, first mentioned the appalling humanitarian situation in Gaza. Then, she addressed the reality of Palestinian women's participation in political life, which is closely linked to the issue of occupation. She explained that women's participation was for a long time limited to joining the different factions, but their roles were exploited within the organisations and their rights were not granted to them outside this framework. It therefore became necessary for women to organize themselves into committees within political organizations. These groups worked mainly in two areas: the political, economic and social reality of Palestinian women's lives, and the participation and investment

of the greatest number in resistance to the occupation. In this context, feminist methods had to be developed to advance the reality of Palestinian women under occupation. This was based on three pillars: logic, which encourages working with studies and research to understand the need for equality between women and men and why women must have the same opportunities; pedagogy, with programs in schools that integrate the notion of gender equality so that future generations understand why change is necessary; and finally, power to find methods of pressure the government to enact laws that respect equality between women and men.

Thanks to this work by feminists, Palestine was the first Arab State to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) without reservation. However, several smear campaigns by conservative factions have been carried out. Sama Owaida concluded by specifying that social issues apply to political and economic issues and that progress cannot be achieved without integrating the human factor.

Rosa San Segundo - FMP, Spain, explained that feminism has burst onto the scene in recent years in Spain, as well as in other Mediterranean countries, and has claimed the women's movement as an undeniable social force. She stated that one of the main demands of the feminist movement in the 1990s was that VAWG be treated as a State priority issue. Thanks to the active participation of feminist associations, this led to the adoption in 2004 of a comprehensive law against gender-based violence, highlighting the essential role of the feminist movement. This law was quickly followed by the creation of a government commission against violence against women. Later, in 2007, a law on equality between men and women was adopted and has become an international reference.

FMP is currently working on a bill against trafficking and exploitation of human beings. She highlighted the threat posed by the rise of conservatism, which makes it more difficult to consolidate the recognition of rights, denies situations such as violence against women and limits public resources devoted to care and prevention.

She mentioned several gaps that prevent women from participating on an equal footing in economic life and the labour market, as well as their over-representation in care-related sectors, where employment is generally lower paid and more precarious. She also emphasized the digital and educational gaps that hold women back in the era of artificial intelligence (AI) and the importance of technologies.

Fawzia Baba-Aissa – Support Fund for Feminist Organizations, started by expressing her support to Gaza and local associations. She then presented the Fund for Women in the Mediterranean, which financially supports the capacity building of organizations in Mediterranean countries. It is a feminist fund that

adopts feminist financing. Fawzia Baba-Aissa outlined several challenges in the present context: women must face the change in power structure in a society shaped by a patriarchal system where being feminist represents a risk to be attacked, isolated, and marginalized. Understanding that other movements do not face these issues is essential to see the need to specifically support women. Furthermore, feminist organizations are generally small structures. It can be difficult to ensure that donors trust these small organizations. In 2021-2022, within the public aid given by States, out of 149 billion euros, 0.03% was distributed to women's organizations. The situation is identical at the donor level. Finally, the rise of far right and anti-gender movements represents a real threat.

To conclude, she explained that the funding allocated to feminist organizations is rarely flexible, often limited in time (not multi-annual), which prevents them from planning. Advocacy must focus on ensuring functional funding for capacity building. She ended by giving institutional examples set up in Europe, such as in France with the support fund for feminist organizations, implemented thanks to the French feminist movement, which supports feminist organizations in the global South with the participation of the French Development Agency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

MAIN POINTS OF DISCUSSION

- ❖ Women's rights and participation are not separated from democracy building in countries in armed conflict and under occupation.
- ❖ Common strategies should be developed to explore funding opportunities in the future in terms of strengthening women's rights.
- ❖ Building alliances, like the support fund, is of utmost importance, as funding is central for the sustainability of the women's movement.
- ❖ The economic and legal rights are essential, especially in countries where discriminatory practices are preventing women from gaining access to positions of power and decision-making.

CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ Feminist action should be approached as political action. A country is supposed to belong to all its citizens, without discrimination on any ethnic, gender or religious basis, as well as democracy cannot be built without women and without the respect of their rights.
- ❖ If women want to bring about change, they must build alliances with those who share their principles in order to abolish laws and practices that discriminate against women and establish mechanisms to protect them.

- ❖ In all contexts, but even more in a context of armed conflicts and occupation, methods have to be developed to advance the reality of women, as working with studies and research to understand the need for equality between women and men, their equal access to same opportunities, as well as to develop programs in schools that make future generations understand why change is necessary; pressure must be put on the governments to enact laws that respect equality between women and men.
- ❖ Thanks to this work by feminists, Palestine was the first Arab State to ratify the CEDAW without reservation.

Third Session: Ways and means of cooperation between feminist organizations in the Mediterranean

The speakers of this closing session, Ambassador Karim Amellal, Namees Arnous, the founder of *E7ky network, Egypt*, and Dina Fazzani from *Legal Aid Coalition (LAC), Libya*, highlighted the importance of strengthening the coordination and networking of women's rights CSOs as well as their structural cooperation with decision-makers. Furthermore, this discussion highlighted the fact that the implementation of women's and girls' rights requires political and budgetary commitment to support feminist and women's rights CSOs.

Boriana Jonsson - Executive Director EuroMed Feminist Initiative, who was moderating this closing session, noted that the discussions throughout the day highlighted the need for cooperation and networking between feminists on both sides of the Mediterranean, as well as with other progressive democratic organisations. Against this backdrop, there was discussion on the different directions that mobilisation should take at a time when the gains made throughout the region must be protected. She stressed the importance of developing efforts to keep a long-term strategy and vision in mind and pointed out that in this regard, funding is a necessary tool for sustaining the strength and organisation of the feminist movement.



Ambassador Karim Amellal stated that for the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the forms of cooperation between feminist organisations are a very important issue. He recalled the context of resurgence of the anti-rights movement and the decline in rights in the region, as well as the conflicts. Gaza was rightly mentioned throughout the day, but so were Libya, Syria and many other crises and hotbeds of tension, which exacerbate the decline and prevent progress. In his view, the collective concern, both with the partners and the actors on the ground, is to design, build and construct a path of hope, a path of progress.

He went on to emphasise the existence of cooperation forums and tools such as today's forum. In particular, he mentioned the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) support fund for feminist organisations, a tool that provides very practical support for the work of women's civil society organisations. Other countries now have a feminist diplomacy and are deploying tools and forums for exchange and dialogue, with financial resources at their disposal to support the daily work of organisations on the ground.

Dina Fazzani – LAC, Libya, began her presentation by explaining that between the 1950s and 1960s, the women's movement in Libya was particularly strong, and that the country then suffered under Gaddafi's authoritarian regime for 42 years. Regarding cooperation between women's organisations in the Mediterranean region, she specified that the problems faced in Libya are mainly linked to the issue of development and the political instability that the country has experienced since 2011, which has led to the obstruction of development efforts and international cooperation. Economic challenges, including lack of equality between women and men in terms of wages in the private sector, due in particular to the weakness of the State and a problem of infrastructure impacts the economic growth and greatly affects women. As far as social challenges are concerned, a large number of Libyans live in poverty, as development does not reach remote and rural areas in terms of education and opportunities. Customs and traditions constantly restrict women's rights.

On the question of regional cooperation and the challenges faced by the women's movement, Dina Fazzani, like the other speakers, corroborated the idea that the women's issue is in fact a political one, and if Libya was stable, women would be more vocal about it. She added that it is now forbidden to use the word “gender” in official correspondence. It is therefore essential to support the political processes and effectively integrate women into the national reconciliation process, because the integration of women, like the Syrian model, serves to satisfy the international community. Finally, she concluded with the idea that a legal framework needs to be established, and human rights respected, because the region is a gateway for immigration from Africa to Europe, and the rights of migrant women are unfortunately trampled.

Namees Arnous - E7kky network, Egypt, recalled that the revolution in Egypt had revealed many stories of women and girls, which prompted her to produce a programme that tells these stories. The aim was to showcase ordinary women with important stories that all women can relate to, and who therefore have the power to create change. She recounted her journey and the barriers she encountered in realising her project, particularly as it focused on a gender approach and dealt with issues such as domestic violence and harassment. However, today's new information and communication technologies represent new tools that are capable of changing and enacting laws. According to Namees Arnous, funding policy does not allow the new generation to face up to the reality on the ground, so creativity and new methods need to be funded.

Boriana Jonsson concluded the day by stating that in the face of shared challenges, solidarity is the needed solution, through networking between feminist organisations and movements for freedoms, in order to make progress around the articulation and implementation of women's rights.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FORUM

To State Leaders and Policy Makers

- **Apply women's rights perspective** to all State actions towards democracy, linking the status of democracy with the status of gender equality in each country.
- **Ensure sustainable funding for** women's rights organisations in order to sustain their work and guarantee access and implementation of women's fundamental rights, including their sexual and reproductive rights.
- **Develop policies, strategies and comprehensive laws to combat VAWG** that define and criminalise all forms of violence against women; protect and assist women victims and their children; penalise perpetrators; ensure coordination between all concerned actors including civil society; include reporting and referral mechanisms as well as training for service providers and public awareness raising, monitoring and evaluation, and data collection and information spreading on services for victims of VAWG.
- **Allocate sufficient funds in the State's budgets for combating VAWG and providing services for women victims** and their families at all stages of the criminal justice process with reference to the 1985 United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, that should include:
 - the right to assistance and care.
 - informing victims of the scope, timing and progress of the proceedings.
 - harmonising databases using an inter-sectorial approach.
- **Adopt CSOs legislation ensuring freedom of expression and movement;** ensure sufficient funding to women's rights organizations on both sides of the Mediterranean, to enable their independence and capacity of action so that they can play their role in shaping the societies.
- **Approach the women's rights organisations as preferential interlocutors and partners** in the development, implementation and monitoring of strategies, policies and laws combating VAWG as they are most often the first facing the victims.
- **Take urgent measures to impose an immediate ceasefire and stop the ongoing genocide in Gaza** and the current violence used in Palestine, as women's rights are inseparable from the freedom of peoples.

To Women's Rights Organizations

Resisting and overcoming backlash of women's rights through International Solidarity, Cooperation and Networking

- **Organise and coordinate joint actions and international solidarity**, exchange of analyses, and best practices to efficiently implement, monitor and evaluate the application of policies, strategies and laws related to women's rights.
- Increase **networking and dialogue**, encouraging the sharing of knowledge and exchange of experiences, to strengthen the awareness and advocacy on women's human rights, notably sexual and reproductive rights.
- Forge **international links with other components of democratic movements** on both sides of the Mediterranean to mobilise around women's rights issues.
- Organize open discussions to elaborate long term strategies and **pressure tactics** on using efficiently international mechanisms to resist and overcome backlash and the rise of fundamentalisms and conservative movements.

Combating Violence against Women and Girls, Defending Sexual and Reproductive Rights

- Link strategies to **combat VAWG** with the need of developing of a comprehensive legislation combating it, where VAWG must be defined, all its forms must be criminalized, and perpetrators prosecuted and penalised. Combating VAWG needs prevention actions on State level, while victims need protection and compensation.
- Adopt across the Mediterranean region **a strategy on Zero-tolerance towards VAWG** with solidarity actions at national and international levels to exchange analyses and best practices, to develop common approaches, to monitor and evaluate the application of the different laws, to apply a survivor-centred approach to and follow-up with survivors.
- **Provide policy makers with data on VAWG** to enable informed decisions and to monitor trends. Information spreading on service provisions is important for victims as well as for raising awareness of the whole society.

- Find ways of **setting up one-stop mechanisms** involving all the relevant stakeholders, from the police, public prosecutors, and social services, so that victims of VAWG do not get lost in endless procedures.
- Raise awareness through education, work **on the value system** and advocate towards banishing the stigma attached to abortion and sexual and reproductive rights to counteract the rise of false information and preconceived ideas about abortion.

Enhancing Women's participation in economic and political life

- Advocate for women's rights and women's participation as **inseparable from sustaining democracy**, and democracy building in countries in armed conflict and under occupation.
- Expose shared discriminatory practices that prevent women from gaining access to positions of power and decision-making and **develop shared strategies across the region** to address them.
- Advocate for the provision of **permanent and structural access to information** on women's socio-economic rights.
- Advocate for legislation and public policies that give **special consideration to the situation of vulnerable women** who, for reasons of age, disability or belonging to some minority group, might suffer intersectional discrimination.

Addressing internal and external challenges

- Ensure continuous capacity-building of feminist organisations to equip them with knowledge and skills to **efficiently** address internal challenges.
- Guarantee **transmission** of feminist culture and knowledge to younger generations to sustain feminist discourse and action.
- **Focus on long-term strategies** to ensure resources and capacity of feminist organisations, while addressing immediate challenges linked to attacks and threats to acquired rights.
- **Develop networking and sustainable cooperation** to both overcome external challenges and to deal with lack of access to funds. Invest in the creation of a stable and sustainable funding model, ensuring the economic stability of the organizations and allowing them to be independent in their actions.

- Keep on strengthening feminists' capacities to be on track with managing **social networks and communication tools**.
- **Maintain policy dialogues** with relevant authorities and decision makers on implementation of laws, to follow up on governmental commitments.

Annex 1 Organizations Participating at the Forum

Country	Civil society organization	Contact name	Email
Albania	Human Rights in Democracy Centre (HRDC)	Aferdita Prroni	qdnjd@albaniaonline.net
Algeria	Centre d'information et de documentation sur les droits des enfants et des femmes (CIDDEF)	Nadia Ait Zai	nadia_ait@yahoo.com
Algeria	Femmes Algériennes revendiquant leurs droits (FARD)	Fatma Boufenik	boufenik_fatma@yahoo.fr
Croatia	CWWV	Nela Pamukovich	cenzena@zamir.net
Croatia	Domine	Mirjana Kucer	kucermirjana@gmail.com
Egypt	Egyptian Centre for Women's Rights (ECWR)	Nehad Abou el Kom	nehadabolkomsan@gmail.com
Egypt	Center for Egyptian Women Legal Assistance (CEWLA)	Azza Soliman	azzalawyer@gmail.com
Egypt	Appropriate Communication Techniques for Development (ACTD)	Azza Kamel	azouza.kamel@gmail.com
Egypt	E7kky network	Namees Arnous	namees@e7kky.com
France	Medfeminiswiya	Françoise Kayser	contact@medfeminiswiya.net
France	BATIK international	Sarahi Gutierrez	sarahigutierrez@batik-international.org
France	Quartier du monde	Natalia Resimont	Natalia.resimont@quartierdumonde.org
Italy	Obiezione Respinta	Bianca Monteleone	biancamonteleone1@gmail.com
Lebanon	KAFA	Zoya Rohana	kafa@kafa.org.lb
Lebanon	MIDAL	Iman Traboulsi	traboulsie_imane@hotmail.com ; midal_association@hotmail.com
Lebanon	Association Najdeh	Leila El Ali	Leila@association-najdeh.org

Libya	Legal Aid Action (LAC)	Dina Dina Fazzani	dinaelzaroug@gmail.com
Libya	Women for Women Libya	Alia Gharghom	womenforwomen.ly@gmail.com
Malta	Doctors for Choice	Isabel Stabile - Natalie Psaila	sabel.stabile@gmail.com nataliepsaila3@gmail.com
Malta	FIDEM	Dr Sabine Cabourd	info@fidem.org.mt
Morocco	Empowerment Coalition Equalité Israr	Houda Benmbarek	houdaconsultante@gmail.com
Morocco	Union pour l'Action Féministe (UAF)	Zahra OUARDI	zahraouardi@yahoo.fr
Morocco	Jossour - Forum des femmes marocaines	Ouaffa Hajji	jossourffm@yahoo.fr
Palestine	Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development (PWWSD)	Amal Khreishe	amalkhreishe@yahoo.com
Palestine	Women's Studies Center (WSC)	Sama Aweida	director@wsc-pal.org
Spain	Federacion de Mujeres Progresistas (FMP)	Rosa San Segundo	comunicacion@fmujeresprogresistas.org
Syria (diaspora)	Syrian Women Political Movement (SWPM)	Sabiha Khalil	khalilsabiha@yahoo.com
Syria (diaspora)	Syrian Feminist Platform	Wejjdan Nassif	wajdnass@gmail.com
Syria (diaspora)	Gender Advocacy Group	Doris Awaad	dorisawwad29@gmail.com
Tunisia	Tunisian association of democratic women (ATFD)	Halima Jouini	contact@atfd-tunisie.org
Tunisia	Aswat Nissa	Monia Kari	moniakarimonia@gmail.com
Tunisia	MARA-MED (Movement for Abortion Rights and Access)	Selma Hajri	coordination.mara@gmail.com
Tunisia	Tunisian Women's Association for Development Research (AFTUR)	Moufida Abassi	abassimoufida2021@gmail.com
Türkiye	Kadınlarla dayanışma vaka (KADAV)	Clemence Dumas	clemence.dumas@sciencespo.fr
Türkiye	Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR)	Ceren Akkaya	hilal.gencay@wwhr.org akkayacerencansu@gmail.com

The First Mediterranean Feminist Forum was organised by the EuroMed Feminist Initiative, in partnership with the Interministerial Delegation for the Mediterranean of French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and with the contribution of the Arab World Institute in Paris, the French Development Agency, Wimbeetech and Campusna.

It contributed to strengthening feminist networking from both sides of the Mediterranean and widened the space for cooperation and common action.

Over 50 participants from 16 countries exchanged analyses, experiences, lessons learned and good practices from both sides of the Mediterranean and agreed that collaboration among feminist movements and broadening common feminist interventions in political, social, and economic life are crucial for improving the wellbeing of the societies.