

COMECE issues statement ahead of EP vote on the inclusion of abortion in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

9 April 2024

COMECE, April 9th, 2024

Ahead of the vote by the European Parliament on the Resolution for the 'Inclusion of the right to abortion in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights' (2024/2655 RSP), scheduled for Thursday, 11 April 2024, the Presidency of the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) has issued the following statement.

Yes to the promotion of women and to the right to life, no to abortion and ideological imposition

The promotion of women and their rights is not related to the promotion of abortion. We work for a Europe where women can live their maternity freely and as a gift for them and for society and where being a mother is in no way a limitation for personal, social and professional life. Promoting and facilitating abortion goes in the opposite direction to the real promotion of women and their rights.

Abortion can never be a fundamental right. The right to life is the fundamental pillar of all other human rights, especially the right to life of the most vulnerable, fragile and defenceless, like the unborn child in the womb of the mother, the migrant, the old, the person with disabilities and the sick. The Church has always taught this consistently: "It must, therefore, be stated with all force and clarity, even in our time, that this defense of unborn life is closely linked to the defense of each and every other human right. It involves the conviction that a human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development. Human beings are ends in themselves and never a means of resolving other problems. Once this conviction disappears, so do solid and lasting foundations for the defense of human rights, which would always be subject to the passing whims of the powers that be" (Declaration "Dignitas Infinita" on Human Dignity, Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, April 2024; n. 47).

The European Union must respect the different cultures and traditions in the Member States and their national competences. The European Union cannot impose on others, inside and outside its borders, ideological positions on the human person, sexuality and gender, marriage and family, etc.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU cannot include rights that are not recognized by all and are divisive. There is no recognized right to abortion in European or International Law, and the way this issue is treated in the Constitutions and Laws of Member States varies considerably. As the Preamble states, the Charter must respect "the diversity of the cultures and traditions of the peoples of Europe," as also the "constitutional traditions and international obligations common to the Member States."

Approved by the Standing Committee of COMECE:

✠ Mariano Crociata

Bishop of Latina (Italy), President

✠ Antoine Hérouard

Archbishop of Dijon (France), First Vice-President

✠ Nuno Brás da Silva Martins

Bishop of Funchal (Portugal), Vice-President

✠ Czesław Kozon

Bishop of Copenhagen (Scandinavia), Vice-President

✠ Rimantas Norvila

Bishop of Vilnius (Lithuania), Vice-President



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