



Declaration of the Central European Inspiration against the Istanbul Convention

Dear members of the National Assembly of Bulgaria, of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, of the National Assembly of Hungary, of the National Council of Slovakia,

We are asking you not to approve the ratification of the “Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence” (commonly referred to as the Istanbul Convention) as it is not only redundant in our countries but also dangerous in its implications since it can lead to serious encroachments on the functioning of the state and its institutions, especially schools, on the life of families as well as individuals and on activities of businesses and associations. It opens the door to dangerous ideological trends and violates the principles of fairness and justice – the highest values in the rule of law.

Below are listed the reasons why we are against the Istanbul Convention and why we are appealing to the judicious Parliaments of countries which have not yet ratified the Convention not to do so in the future. By remaining steadfast in their refusal to approve it they will provide invaluable service to those European countries whose politicians did not recognize this threat or underestimated it.

It is redundant:

- Our systems of law are based on the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; we abide by the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Equality between men and women is included in binding legal documents for the education system, where the opportunity for prevention is the biggest. The current legislation in the Czech Republic criminalises all forms of violence in its full range and the police as well as the judiciary are well aware of the seriousness and the particularities of this issue.

It is dangerous and harmful:

- **The Convention declares “a combat against violence” while engendering a new type of violence: violence against the ideals of European culture, against scientific knowledge and against the common sense, which is based on the lived social reality.**
- The Istanbul Convention degrades relationships between men and women to an antagonistic power struggle. It stipulates that all violence against a woman shall be considered as gender-based. All boys and men are viewed as potential violent abusers who need to be re-educated. It allows “special” discriminatory measures which shall not be deemed discriminatory and it forbids alternative conflict resolution methods such as mediation and conciliation.
- The Istanbul Convention infringes the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights. It newly forbids discrimination on the basis of gender identity. The list of sexual orientations is chaotic and, what is more, the term “gender identity” is not defined at all. Belonging to a potentially discriminated group is in fact based solely on the self-concept of the individual, which is subjective and variable in time. It is inadmissible for such a construct to legitimise encroachments on all areas of society and even to allow sanctions for not recognizing the gender identity of another person at a particular moment.
- With the aim to curb stereotypical concepts of male and female roles the Convention allows for criminal sanctions against not only religious teachings but also against scientific papers on biological and physiological differences between men and women. This is an extremely dangerous approach typical of totalitarianism.
- The Convention is an attempt to force signatory countries, by the means of an international treaty, to introduce policies which would otherwise never be adopted through the national democratic process. This is an attempt by a radical ideological lobby at pushing through its agenda against the will of the vast majority of inhabitants of our countries.

- As part of its fight against the so-called “cultural stereotypes about men and women” the Convention attacks the European culture and is trying to prevent its passing on to the new generation whereas the human being can only develop into a full personality in an environment of a culture whose values he/she embraces, enriches and passes on. Culture guarantees social cohesion. The European culture has always emphasised a heightened protection of women and courteous behaviour of men towards women. The European tradition gives women a higher social status than men and one of its basic values is respecting and honouring the irreplaceable biological vocation of women to give birth to new life.

**Our opposition to the Istanbul Convention stems from our loyalty to Europe, where we live,
and which we love.**

We will be honoured if you join us.

Central European Inspiration is an initiative of citizens who believe in the ideal of dynamic harmony among the nations of Europe, an initiative of inhabitants who see their future within the EU.

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