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European Commissioner for Justice,
Consumers and Gender Equality
Věra Jourová,
European Commission
Rue de la Loi/ Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Brussels, Thursday 15 March 2018

Dear European Commissioner, Ms Věra Jourová,

I am writing to express my deepest concern on the delay from the European Commission to establish a "European Year of Combating Violence against Women".

On the 9 September 2010, 402 Members of the European Parliament signed a written declaration demanding that the European Commission establishes a "European Year of Combating Violence against Women", within the next five years. This request was reiterated in a report of 13 May 2015 on the EU Strategy for Equality between Women and Men, prepared by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality. It has now been over two years since the deadline set for the Commission to respond to this request expired.

I am well aware that the Commission proposed in 2017 to end violence against women through a year of focused actions that aimed to connect all efforts across the European Union to stop violence against women and girls. I also acknowledge that the Commission launched a series of actions to combat violence against women and girls in all its forms, allocating €10 million to support grassroots efforts to prevent gender-based violence and support its victims in the European Union. In addition, I recognise the efforts made by the Commission to urge the Member States that have not ratified yet the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and recommend them to do so without any further delays.

Yet despite all of these initiatives, 2017 was not recognised as an official European Year.

In this context of repeated calls from the European parliament, I believe that this missed opportunity to raise the profile of the EU's agenda on tackling violence against women deserves an explanation from the Commission.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Jude Kirton-Darling MEP