

## Statement by WIIS Italy

### We stand with Turkish women!

20 March 2021 - President Erdogan has decided to withdraw Turkey from The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). In this difficult situation, WIIS Italy expresses the utmost solidarity to all Turkish women who are the victims of this decision.

In 2012, Turkey was the first country to ratify the Istanbul Convention, which was opened for signature on 11 May 2011, in the Turkish city. On 20 March 2021, the country announced its decision to withdraw by Presidential decree.

*"A huge step backwards that compromises the protection of women in Turkey, in Europe and even beyond" says the General Secretary of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejcinovic Buric, after Erdogan's announcement. "In a country where three women are killed every day, (the Convention) it was our only hope, abandoning it the Turkish government challenges human rights and gender equality" says writer Elif Shafak, and by doing so the Turkish government does not recognise the right to life without violence (Women's Coalition Turkey).*

**"President Erdogan's gesture is a declaration of war on women and democracy, and a challenge to the European institutions. It also represents a dangerous precedent due to the spreading also in Europe of political forces that consider women's rights and their free choices a danger undermining the patriarchal structure of the family and of society as a whole", declares Irene Fellin, President of WIIS Italy. "This is a phenomenon that does not spare even our country, where news of femicides and other forms of violence and abuse against women are on the agenda. The Istanbul Convention must not only be preserved, but above all it must be duly implemented by all ratifying countries."**

WIIS Italy expresses its support and requests maximum solidarity from national and European institutions towards Turkish women who are rejecting this decision and who are mobilizing peacefully, not wanting to give up their freedom of choice and their rights to be protected against gender-based violence by their own institutions.

Statement by UN Women on Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention

See <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/3/statement-un-women-turkey-withdrawal-from-the-istanbul-convention>