

To the attention of:

Ms Lindita Nikolla
Speaker of the Parliament
for all the Members of the Albanian Parliament

FOR INFORMATION:
Mr Bajram Begaj,
President of Albania

Mr Edi Rama,
Prime Minister

Ms Albana Koçiu,
Minister of Health

Brussels, the 19th of June 2024

Madam Speaker of the Parliament,
Dear Ms Nikolla,

With its 33 Member Organisations from 20 European Countries, the Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE) has the twofold mission of bringing the voice of the Family at all institutional levels, while also building a pluralistic society in contribution to the Common Good.

It is in this spirit that, following the reports made by the *Albanian Pro Family and Life Coalition*, we address this letter to you and to all the Members of the Albanian Parliament. We urge you to listen to the numerous voices coming from civil society, legal and scientific experts, a diverse collection of religious denominations and victims of human trafficking to withdraw the draft law "On sexual and reproductive health". Said law contains several proposals that, if implemented, would deteriorate ethical standards in your country and contradict the respect of human dignity.

Among its several problematic aspects, we draw your attention to the fact that it would legalise both domestic and international surrogacy. Such a change appears to ignore the European Union's inclusion of the exploitation of surrogacy in the list of human trafficking crimes. Indeed, as stated by the European Parliament, the practice of surrogacy "undermines the human dignity of the woman since her body and its reproductive functions are used as a commodity; considers that the practice of gestational surrogacy which involves reproductive exploitation and use of the human body for financial or other gain, in particular in the case of vulnerable women in developing countries, shall be prohibited and treated as a matter of urgency in human rights instruments" (§115, *Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2014 and the European Union's policy on the matter*).

Additionally, the draft law "On sexual and reproductive health" favours abortion, without addressing the root causes that lead a woman to refuse a life in her womb. As Pope Francis stated in his 2020

address to the UN General Assembly: "It is troubling to see how simple and convenient it has become for some to deny the existence of a human life as a solution to problems that can and must be solved for both the mother and her unborn child." Additionally, together with Albania's Mother Teresa, in a Europe that again has been facing devastating war, we cannot forget that "the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion".

Further aspects of the proposed law on "On sexual and reproductive health" risks reducing Albania to a marketplace of human procreation, with no proposals for letting life flourish through the family - the real treasure of your beautiful country.

We fully support the Manifesto promoted by the Pro-family Coalition of Albania and we ask you to listen to the voice of the people and, respecting democratic principles and procedures, to prevent this draft to become law. We believe that Albania is Europe. But, today, the future of Albania is at stake. The future of Europe is also at stake.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely yours,

Vincenzo Bassi
President

