



Virtual Eid Reception event

I would first like to thank FEMYSO for this initiative, which especially during this period of lockdown gives us the chance to come together for a joyful event celebrating the end of Ramadan.

It makes me even happier that the value of sharing this celebration is fully realized by the participation of our parliamentarians and civil society actors.

I would also like to congratulate our member associations who were able to assist their members in this difficult period. In partnership with local associations our member organisations provided assistance to families, and psychological support to women who were affected by this situation.

As an organisation that concentrates on Muslim women's needs and intersectional discrimination they face in their respective societies, we observed that women have been fighting several fights at the same time, being especially affected by the Europe-wide lockdowns: taking care of their family's needs, monitoring children's studies online, managing their own professional work, and carrying out household chores.

More than before, women need peer-support and psychological assistance to manage and face these tribulations balancing their physical & mental health, spirituality and civic participation.

In this blessed month of Ramadan, which for Muslims meant adapting to new kinds of practice both on the community and individual levels, we came nevertheless once again to realize how important it is to emphasize our spiritual values of sharing in richness and food, supporting each other, giving a helping hand to those in need.

These are values of importance for our civic identities that contribute towards an inclusive Europe as we together take care of all our fellow citizens despite their background.

I am particularly proud to have observed during this period the active citizenship of European Muslims, who actively participated, as associations or organizations, mosque communities or simply as individuals in solidarity with everyone else to fight the pandemic.

For the European Forum of Muslim Women this means that we are looking forward to all European citizens being united against discrimination and racism of all kinds, poverty, and hate crime, which especially in the upcoming months and years - with the economic crises that we will be facing in Europe - will form an imperative for us as an organisation to fight against.

What I wish for the times ahead as we are looking forward to overcome the consequences of the pandemic, is an increased understanding that shared problems mean shared responsibilities.

Together and united we are stronger.

Dorsaf BEN DHIAB
Efomw's Chair



Eid message:

Assalaamu alaykum and good afternoon everyone!

Eid Mubarak!

I hope that even in the present challenging circumstances, you were able to have a joyous Eid.

I hope that Eid brought happiness in your hearts and homes, I hope that it also brought care and solidarity towards those who are struggling and going through difficulties.

Eid-al-Fitr means festival of breaking fast and it commemorates the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting. The month in which, those who observe it, seek to establish the balance between the spiritual and material selves by abstaining from food, drink and by balancing needs of the body and those of the soul.

Ramadan, leading to Eid is an opportunity to become a better human, in every sense, and share the positive outcomes with our families, communities and wider world. Ramadan is a month of encouraging hope, love, solidarity, resilience, and patience – all of which were particularly valuable during COVID19 pandemic.

COVID19 escalated the existing discriminations in Europe. We heard of Muslim communities in Spain struggling with racial profiling, an increase of hate speech, lack of support and even complete lack of burial places for deceased Muslims. However, we have also witnessed many instances of compassion and solidarity between communities. For example, our member organisation from Germany has mentioned how some churches were made available for Muslims to pray. In Ireland, Muslim communities took a lead in food parcel distribution to those who were self-isolating and unable to shop for their groceries. In Italy, our members talked about humanitarian efforts of the Muslim community (and particularly women) during the month of Ramadan, helping those in need financially, donating money to hospitals and distributing food. In Italy, these activities managed to dilute and silence the ever-present Far-Right voices which were gaining prominence at the beginning of the pandemic.

We hope that these and many other examples, within and beyond EU, will be a positive reminder that we need to work together and contribute to a better future for all.

EFOMW's main aim is for Muslim women in Europe to be treated as equal citizens. The celebrations like this one demonstrate diversity and equality of all citizens in Europe.

Celebration of diversity and the understanding that it is the diversity which makes Europe stronger is important now, more than ever. The power lies in solidarity and people coming together.

I hope that we can recommit ourselves to a common cause of promoting peace, understanding and inclusion for all people, regardless of our differences. I hope that we can be truly inclusive within and beyond our immediate communities, supporting and celebrating the plurality of voices and views.

I also hope that the examples mentioned, of the women belonging to our Forum, can inspire and help all women to fight and challenge negative stereotypes that Muslim women are so familiar with.

Dr. Sanja Bilic

Operations and Policy Manager- EFOMW