



EMMA BONINO

Italian Senate, Vice-Chair

**International Crisis Group (ICG), Board
Vice-Chair**

**European Council on Foreign Relations
(ECFR), Board Member**

**Italian-Turkish Forum of Dialogue,
Chair**

Born : Bra (Cuneo), Italy, on March 9, **1948**

Nationality : Italian

Status : Single

Studies : Degree in Modern Languages, Bocconi University, Milan, **1972**

National Political Career

Elected to the Italian **Chamber of Deputies in 1976**; re-elected at every subsequent election (**1979, 1983, 1987, 1992, 1994**). Has held office such as that of chair of the parliamentary group of the Radical Party and was a member of the Presidential Bureau of the Parliament. Re-elected Member of Parliament for the seventh time in 2006.

Founder in 1975 of the CISA, Information Centre on Sterilisation and Abortion, and promoter of the referendum which led to the introduction of the **legalisation of abortion** in Italy.

Promoter of a **referendum against nuclear energy (1986)** that led to the rejection of a civil nuclear energy programme in Italy.

Appointed in May 2008 **Minister for International Trade and European Affairs**.

International Political Career

Elected to the **European Parliament in 1979**; re-elected in **1984, 1999** and in **2004**.

President (**1991-1993**) and Secretary (**1993-1994**), **Transnational Radical Party**.

Appointed in October **1994 Head of the Italian Government delegation** to the UN General Assembly for the "Moratorium on death penalty" initiative.

Appointed in **1994 European Commissioner** responsible for Consumer Policy, Fisheries and the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO). In 1997 her field of competence was widened to include consumer health protection and food safety.

Appointed, in November **2002, Head of the Italian Delegation to the Inter-governmental Conference of the Community of Democracies in Seoul**, and again in **2005, Head of the Italian Delegation to its Third Ministerial Conference in Santiago, Chile**.

Campaigns on issues related to civil society undertaken at international level

For almost thirty years Emma Bonino's political activities, have been characterised by the rigorous practice of "active non-violence", defined and adopted by Mahatma Gandhi and now practised by the Transnational Radical Party. This explains her frequent participation in the hunger and thirst strikes, as well as in the acts of civil disobedience, that have accompanied the main political campaigns launched by her party. The aim of active non-violence is to force the institutions to respect themselves and their own laws. Acts of civil disobedience aim to show the inadequacy or the iniquity of a particular law, and therefore the need to change it, not by contesting it with words but by applying it "to its extreme consequences", for example by confessing that one has violated it, thus leading to trials that have exemplary value for the general public. Strongly committed against any discrimination, particularly on women, sexual behaviours, and religious freedom, she has promoted and organised several campaigns, all aiming at solving major social problems with the methodology of "regulating and legalising", methodology which she considers the most apt at curbing criminal interests and the most adequate to overcome dangerous gaps between society, laws and institutions.

With this methodology and this concept, battles against the prohibition of divorce and against clandestine abortion were won in Italy and are currently being used in the fight against punitivism and prohibition on drugs.

Founder (**1978**) and head of the association "**Food and Disarmament International**", which led a campaign for famine-relief based on the "Manifesto

of Nobel Prize Winners" (signed by 113 Nobel Laureates), as well as head of **PARIFA (1982) (Italian Parliamentarians against Hunger)**, an organisation which played a major role in the increase ten times over of the Italian contribution to development assistance. Both organisations were based on the concept of promoting "democracy" as a human right in itself, as foreseen in The Universal Declaration of human rights.

Promoter of an international campaign **(1987)** in support of **civil and political rights in Eastern Europe**.

1990/2002. Promoter of international campaigns in favour of ad hoc **tribunals on war crimes in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda**; for the establishment of **a permanent international criminal court** (Rome Diplomatic Conference and approval of the Statute in 1998), a **moratorium on the death penalty**, and measures to combat AIDS.

Among the founders of the NGOs **No Peace Without Justice** and **Hands Off Cain**.

1997/1998. Promoter, as European Commissioner, of the European Parliament campaign **"A flower for the women of Kabul"** (in collaboration with "Médécins du Monde" and with the support of European and American NGOs), against discrimination in general in Afghanistan and in particular to give Afghani women access to humanitarian aid.

2000/2002. Among the promoters of an international campaign (in collaboration with the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Inter-African Committee against traditional practices and a specially-formed network of European NGOs) **for the eradication of female genital mutilation (FGM)** and other "traditional practices" in the 28 African and Arab countries in which they are practised, and for the recognition by the Member States of the EU of the right to asylum of women and girls who may be victims of FGM.

Among the organisers in Cairo, where she lives, of the International Conference (June 2003) on "Legal Tools for the elimination of FGM": the conference was opened by Her Excellency Susan Mubarak, Her Excellency Grand Imam Sheikh Mohamed Sayed Tantawi, Sheikh of Al-Azhar, Bishop Moussa, the Bishop for Youth of the Coptic Orthodox Church, representative of Pope Shenouda III, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the Coptic Church, and was attended by representatives of governments and NGOs from the twenty-eight most affected Afro-Arab countries.

December 2001. Promoter of the international campaign **for the inclusion of women in the interim Government of Afghanistan**.

Awards

Awarded the "**Gran Cruz de la Orden de Mayo**" (1995) by the President of Argentina

Named "**European Personality of the Year**" (1996) by the French Catholic weekly "La vie"

Named "**European Communicator of the Year**" (1997) by the British weekly "PR Week"

Awarded the "**Premio Principe de Asturias**" (1998) for international co-operation by H.E. Prince Felipe of Spain

Awarded the "**Order of the Prince Branimir**" (2002) by the President of Croatia "for her contribution to the independence of Croatia and for her promotion of democracy"

Awarded the "**Premio Presidente della Repubblica**" (2003) for her commitment in promoting human and civil rights world-wide

Awarded the "**Prix Femmes d'Europe 2004**" for Italy

Awarded the "**Open Society Prize 2004**"

Awarded the "**Bosphorus Prize**" (2008)

Awarded the "**National Order of the Legion of Honour**" (2009)