AIMS For a better birth...

The 4th European Midwives Association Education Conference

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On 29 and 30 October 2013 in Maastricht, The Netherlands, 209 midwives from 25 countries gathered to discuss midwifery education at the 4th European
Midwives Association (EMA) Education Conference.Conference delegates unanimously supported a statement of warning to Dutch Society. Many European countries look upon the Netherlands as a good example of autonomous midwifery. The president of the EMA, Mervi Jokinen calls this 'midwifery at its best'. However the pressure on the autonomous position of midwives in the Netherlands is increasing. Our European colleagues know by experience what the outcome of such pressure can be as they struggle to maintain the human face of childbirth.

During the meeting deep concern and surprise was expressed about the direction of the political debate in Europe regarding the position of midwives. Dutch Midwifery is seen as midwifery at its best and EMA strongly advises Dutch women and their families, the government, health insurance companies and media to support Dutch midwives and to protect their autonomous position.

Statement
Autonomous midwives are the most appropriate caregivers for childbearing women. Midwives enhance the health of women and their families and keep birth normal.

This statement is endorsed by a vast amount of scientific research and recent outcomes of a Cochrane Review on midwife-led-continuity of care. Please support us by circulating this statement as widely as possible.

Mervi Jokinen
President of the European Midwives Association