



Emma Bonino

Born in Bra, Cuneo, Italy, on 9 March 1948

Degree in foreign languages and literature from the Bocconi University of Milan (1972)

1975 Founder of the CISA (Centro informazione, sterilizzazione e aborto), which provides women with medical assistance

- 1976 Elected to the Italian Chamber of Deputies; re-elected at every subsequent election (1979, 1983, 1987, 1992, 1994). Has held various offices such as that of chair of the parliamentary group of the Radical Party and member of the Bureau of Parliament
- 1978 Prime mover of a referendum against nuclear energy, which resulted in the blocking of civil nuclear power in Italy
- 1979 Elected to the European Parliament; re-elected in 1984
- 1981 Founder member and then secretary of Food and Disarmament International
- 1987 Promoter of international human, civil and political rights campaigns in the countries of Eastern Europe
- 1991 Active supporter of an anti-prohibition policy on drugs through parliamentary, referendum and civil disobedience campaigns
- 1991-93 Chair of the Radical Party
- 1993-94 Elected Secretary of the Party Promoter of international campaigns for the establishment of the Yugoslav War Crimes Tribunal, for the setting-up of an international criminal court and for a moratorium on the death penalty



Emma Bonino (Biographical Notes)

Emma Bonino is an Italian MP and Secretary of the Presidency of the Chamber of Deputies. She is also European Union Commissioner on Consumer Policy, delegated to the ECHO (European Community Humanitarian Organization).

Born in Bra (Cuneo) on March 9, 1948, Bonino has a degree in Languages obtained at the University of Milan in 1972.

Politically active as a student, in 1975 Bonino and Adele Faccio, in support of the Radical campaign that in the course of a few years was to make abortion legal, founded the CISA (Information Center for Sterilization and Abortion) where, practicing a particularly challenging form of "civil disobedience", Bonino provided medical assistance to women. This initiative led to Bonino, Adele Faccio and others being arrested in June 1975. Already one of the leading members of the Radical Party, in June 1976 she was elected to the Italian Chamber of Deputies, where she promoted parliamentary and non-parliamentary campaigns for the de-criminalization of soft drugs, as well as in favor of abortion. In 1978 she played a key role in collecting the 700,000 signatures necessary to hold a referendum contesting the pro-nuclear policy of the Italian Government. The referendum was judged inadmissible by the Constitutional Court, but the initiative succeeded in blocking the use of nuclear power anyway. A further referendum promoted by the Radicals after the Chernobyl disaster was widely supported by public opinion.

In 1979, Emma Bonino was returned to the Chamber of Deputies and elected for the first time to the European Parliament: in August 1979 she participated in the World Food Council and then the Paris Conference on Underdeveloped Countries. She and Marco Pannella launched the Campaign against Death from Starvation in the World, the "Holocaust of our times". In 1981, as a founder member of the "Food and Disarmament International" organization Bonino was one of the promoters of the "Appeal of the Nobel Prizewinners" (signed by over one hundred Laureates) to obtain from parliaments laws and budgets capable of saving millions of people in the Third and Fourth Worlds that were suffering terribly from underdevelopment. She has helped to organize conferences and assemblies within the sphere of the International Council of "Parliamentarians for Global Action". Such campaigns were often strengthened by nonviolent initiatives like hunger and thirst strikes.

In July 1981 Bonino was President of the Radical Parliamentary Group. Returned to Parliament in 1983, she resigned shortly afterwards to dedicate her energies to organizing the I poveri non mangiano teorie (The Poor Can't Survive on Theories) Conference held in Rome at Easter 1984. In March 1985, the Campaign against Death from Starvation in the World succeeded in submitting to the Italian Parliament a bill (supported by MPs from all Parties) requesting that a billion dollars be allotted "To save, in the following 18 months, as many human beings as possible, who would otherwise be condemned to death from starvation". Public opinion finally became sensitive to this issue which up till then had been deliberately ignored also by the ruling class.

In May 1985 Emma Bonino succeeded Belgian Jean Fabre as General Secretary of "Food and Disarmament International". Returned to the Chamber in 1986, she promoted international initiatives to defend human, civil and political rights: in particular, the one to have the Helsinki Treaty enforced in the case of those Russian Jews - the refuseniks - who had been refused permission to emigrate from the Soviet Union. Along with activist groups from various countries she organized demonstrations in Jerusalem and in major European capitals. Bonino was stopped and held in prison in Warsaw and Prague. In the light of what had occurred in the former Yugoslavia, she pushed for the recognition of the Republics of Croatia, Bosnia, Macedonia and Kosovo. While the Radical Party was reorganizing itself on a transnational scale Emma Bonino helped to organize the "Hands Off Cains" - Citizens' and Parliamentarians' League to Abolish the Death Penalty Worldwide by the Year 2000.

For two years running she was President of the Transnational Radical Party and was elected Party Secretary at the second Session of the 36th Congress (February 1993), taking office at the meeting of the General Council of the Radical Party held in Sofia (July 1993).

Re-elected to the Italian Chamber of Deputies in 1992 and 1994, she was appointed Secretary to the Presidency of the Chamber for both terms. Bonino is the Italian Government's designated spokesperson at the 49th Session of the U.N. General Assembly, on the issue of the permanent International Criminal Court to judge crimes against humanity. Italy has also submitted to the UNGA a Draft Resolution for a universal moratorium on executions that was promoted and drawn up by the Radical Party and its affiliate "Hands Off Cain". Emma Bonino delivered a speech dealing with the above issues to the U.N.'s Sixth Committee on October 25, 1994.