

**Professor Danuta Hübner**

**“European Parliament should strengthen its role as guardian of gender equality”**

**Plenary speech on the „Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament – annual report 2020”**

**European Parliament, Brussels (online)**

**March 8, 2022**

Colleagues, commissioner

In this House we know how important equality and representation are for democracy.

We also know that inclusive leadership is good for the quality of decision making.

With 40% women among our membership the European Parliament represents inclusive leadership in European politics.

But we also know that some political parties in the House do not accept any inclusivity, also in terms of gender.

The context for the equality we have to look at today includes Covid consequences, insane Putin’s aggression, long term gender gaps in many areas of our life, and conclusions of the recent report on the RRF implementation.

This context tells us that the need for progress on all gender fronts remains fundamental.

We also see with more clarity that the progress can only be achieved through binding measures.

Fortunately, as co-legislator we have the tool in our hands.

Colleagues, now in the time of multiple challenges we must remain particularly vigilant.

There are risks of reversing the EU's gains achieved in gender equality over the last two decades.

What was a largely supported achievement ten years ago, the Istanbul Convention, is questioned today in some political parties, in particular in Central European countries where ruling parties reject even the word gender.

We heard it tonight.

This anti gender attitude means that gender equality is rejected as the recognition of human rights for women.

We should include these issues into our dialogue with national parliaments.

The EU has always been seen as a global champion in gender equality largely due to the commitment of the European Parliament.

As we see that political commitment to gender equality cannot be taken for granted, we count on the engagement of the Commission

And our House should strengthen its role as guardian of gender equality.