



Brussels, 8 January 2014

Dear Elena,

Thank you very much for your letter calling for support from the Party of European Socialists (PES) against the Spanish Conservative Government's proposal to drastically curtail a woman's right to choose. As you so rightly say, this is not a law against abortion, this is a law against women.

I can assure you that I will do everything possible to mobilise as many of our PES Member Parties as possible to lend their weight to this fight for the rights of Spanish women. Indeed we should make sure that all of Europe's progressive forces join us in making this stand. This is not just a Socialist fight, but a fight to protect the decent and compassionate decisions that have been made over the last years.

And it is a stand that we should be taking not just in Spain, but all across Europe. Slowly, and sometimes by stealth, the forces of conservatism are trying to steal back the hard earned rights gained by progressive forces and implemented by Progressive Governments. In Poland, in Hungary, to name but two, Conservative forces are introducing measures that give women little or no say and often put them at risk by forcing them to seek solutions in the shadows.

So we will fight with you in Spain against this bill and on any measure in any European Union Country that attempts to turn back the clock on women's rights.

I am very happy that our PES Women President, Zita Gurmai, is with you to discuss our next steps. She has long been at the forefront of this fight, and has a profound understanding of the need for a European front in our campaign for women's rights.

The European Union needs to be seen to be championing the rights of those who make up more than half of its population. The upcoming European elections are a perfect opportunity to show that our family is the one that Women can depend on to promote their fundamental rights. As part of the campaign, a key event celebrating these rights and our role in protecting them is an excellent idea.

Your call for support will be emphatically answered,

Yours sincerely,
Sergei Stanishev