

Mrs. Elżbieta Barbara Witek

President of the Polish Parliament

Brussels, 26 October 2020

Dear Mrs. Witek,

Subject: ALDE Party rejects the ruling of the Polish Constitutional Court

I am writing to you to express our vigorous opposition to the decision adopted last week by the Polish Constitutional Court to rule abortion due to foetal anomaly unconstitutional. In doing so the Court has now effectively delivered an almost total ban on abortion in Poland.

This ruling is an assault on women's basic rights and a direct threat to their health and lives.

The ALDE Party and our members, along with the vast majority of Europeans, believe women should have full access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights including abortion, and that efforts to undermine this are an assault on women's basic rights while also threatening their health and lives. This is yet another example of the global roll-back on women's rights led by authoritarian and illiberal governments and state institutions.

The fact that the Court, whose legitimacy we and others have already challenged, has decided to make this highly controversial and unpopular decision at a time when citizens are dealing with a global pandemic and face restrictions on expressing their opposition publicly, clearly shows that those behind the decision fear real scrutiny and proper democratic process.

As European Liberals, we believe that a woman's decision whether or not to bear a child is fundamental to her life, to her dignity and her well-being. In taking control of women's decisions and bodies, the Polish government is telling women they are less than a full adult human beings capable of exercising responsibility over their own choices.

We call on the Polish Parliament to reject the ruling and to respect basic human rights, stop regulating women's bodies and stop using the cover of the pandemic to force through an illiberal and unpopular agenda.

Yours sincerely,

Hans van Baalen

ALDE Party President