

We, women of Europe, will not be silent.

For more than a decade, extremist and xenophobic sentiments have grown stronger in Europe.

Extremists are already at the helm in countries such as Poland and Hungary where they violate civil rights and erode democracy to descend into authoritarianism.

In other countries, similar extremist charlatans are getting stronger and it is only a matter of time before they win elections and then inflict their vision of society upon unsuspecting citizens.

We are writing this now because the extremists in Poland have decided to torture Polish women by forcing them to forcibly carry pregnancies with foetal defects. The fruit of these pregnancies will likely only survive a few pain-filled days.

Why? In the name of religious dogma. Polish authorities are forcing a radical interpretation of religious teachings upon all Polish women, tossing aside virtues such as compassion, human dignity and self-determination.

The Polish authorities' cynical response is to create 'crying rooms' for women to mourn their loss.... Unfortunately, this is not a joke. Because someone decided that a few days of a baby's life in terrible suffering is more important than terminating such a pregnancy, sparing their mothers' and families' suffering. In 2021, a Poland within the European Union, this is the government's proposal rather than psychological support or state aid in the upbringing of disabled children. Families with disabled children in Poland, in many cases, live in poverty, in oblivion.

Since the ban on abortion, Polish women have taken to the streets in peaceful mass protests. However, the Polish authorities have responded with massive and regular police abuse. Polish police beat, tear-gas, arrest, intimidate the women protesters while the government media denounce them as murderers and psychopaths.

Now is time for concrete action. Not for expressions of indignation, not for pompous speeches.

We Europeans are a Union of values, not just a community of interests.

We Europeans, sisters of Polish women, demand full women's rights – the right to safe termination of pregnancy – the right to sexuality education – the right to dignity – and the right to be respected.

Today, Poland has become a hell for women, tomorrow it may be my country if we don't rise up.

Your name(s) and surname(s)