**Katarina Barley (S&D).** – Mr President, I wish to welcome the Prime Minister to the European people’s Chamber, to the heart of European democracy that we fight hard for.

The independence of the judiciary has to be an essential part of every Member State. It’s the European Court of Justice who said that – not in a Polish case, but in a Portuguese case. Why do I stress that? It’s because you keep keeping up this double‑standard narrative. It’s just not true.

The Polish justice minister wants to sue Germany now because of our election procedure for judges. Just go ahead. You have a very good example of the independence of the judiciary in Germany, with the German court ruling that you mentioned. The decision by the German Court of Justice, the Constitutional Court, is a good example. It ruled against the government, which fought heavily for a different outcome. In the Polish case you see the opposite. You see the Polish Government asking for a decision and the Constitutional Court delivering it. We’ve seen that also with the US, when it came to the abortion law.

The Polish Constitutional Court was designed and organised to serve the government, not to control it, and that is the difference. In its judgment, the German Constitutional Court stressed the primacy of EU law explicitly. It has never declared parts of the European Treaties unconstitutional. No Constitutional Court has ever done that.

How can you say that others get away with it and Poland doesn’t? Germany is facing an infringement procedure for this Constitutional Court ruling, and rightfully so. If the Commission takes action in the German case, of course it has to in the Polish case, which is in so many ways more severe. It is not the EU applying double standards, it is the Polish Government acting like no other. You’re trying to redefine democratic values in a way that you get rid of any sort of control – of what democrats call the separation of powers – and that is against the Treaties. So now you want to get rid of the Treaties, too – and that is anti‑democratic.

The Polish people deserve our greatest respect. They contributed so much to the fall of the Iron Curtain and are an important part of this European Union. They want to be part of it by a vast majority. Let’s make it clear: it is the Polish Government who is putting their European future at risk, and nobody else.