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Diana Riba i Giner “Mr Borrell, it is not that we are learning to play like men. We are learning to break the silence.”

EFA MEP Diana Riba i Giner intervened in plenary today during the “Violence and discrimination in the world of sports after the FIFA Women’s World Cup” debate.

The Catalan MEP highlighted the positive work the European Parliament has carried out in terms of gender equality, but reminded the long road ahead to end violence against women’s and girls.

“We are in a fruitful legislature as far as the fight for gender equality is concerned. But let's be clear, the work that remains to be done is enormous. Events such as Luis Rubiales' non-consensual kiss with Jenni Hermoso in front of the whole world show us how difficult it is to break with violence and impunity that are structural.”

Diana Riba i Giner called for legislative action to protect athletes and guarantee gender equality on the institution's governing bodies. MEP Riba made clear this was not the only issue for women in sports, and appealed for the concept of equality to translate also into promoting female sports and achieving equal pay across professionals.

“The number of female members of federations and female referees is still vastly lower. And the pay gap is unacceptable: the best female player in the world, Alexia Putellas, earns the same salary in a year as many players in the men's team earn in a month. “

“There is also an urgent need to increase the presence of women in decision-making bodies in the world of sport. The image of the assembly of the Royal Spanish Football Federation with only 6 women out of 140 members is shameful. By the way, an assembly full of clappers supporting the reactionary and sexist discourse of Luis Rubiales.”

Diana also took the opportunity to address the appalling comments of the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Josep Borrell.

“And no, Mr Borrell, it is not that we are learning to play like men. It is that we are learning to break the silence.”

“As the footballer Vero Boquete said "We have already kept quiet for a long time, we have had to listen a lot and put up with a lot and now we are going to do it". MEP Riba concluded.

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