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**Women's Charter: Our Commitment to
Gender Equality**

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Es gilt das gesprochene Wort

Joint Press Conference with President Barroso

Brussels, 5 March 2010

Ladies and gentlemen, for me this is an important moment. For several reasons:

- first, it is the first time that I come to this press room in my new role as Vice-President of the European Commission
- second, I was in New York on Monday to participate in the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Beijing Platform. This was the first time an EU Commissioner took the floor in the UN under the new Lisbon Treaty
- third, it is a special moment and it is a symbolic moment, most of all because here we stand, a man and a woman, a President and Vice-President presenting together the Women's Charter -**this is gender equality in action**, real gender equality with women **AND** men on board! That is why I am proud that the President is here with me today to present the Women's Charter.

The President has already told you a bit about the content of the Charter. Let me add some general remarks. **The Women's Charter is the European Union's 'Gender Equality label'**. It is our commitment to gender equality. It is our commitment to take the issue of gender equality out of the small box of single causes and spread it across the whole spectrum of EU policy.

Two days ago, the European Commission made a start: the Europe 2020 Strategy, that we adopted, includes a strong gender dimension. This is a concrete example of what I am talking about: **integrating gender equality systematically into all our political proposals and action**. That is also, by the way, why I believe that having a single EU Commissioner or Minister at national level who is responsible for gender equality is not enough: gender equality has to be **integrated into every policy**. I can reassure you that in the collegial spirit of the European Commission I will work together with all my colleagues to make sure the gender dimension is visible and integrated.

I know that some of you might argue that: *'The Charter is just a political declaration? This is not enough!'* Let me be clear: we are at the start of a new Commission and this Charter is **the starting point. This Charter will be translated, in the next five years, into concrete actions in all the different policy fields**. And since the whole of the Commission has backed this Charter, I am confident that no matter what portfolio, we will get the work done – jointly.

In just a few moments I will present figures about EU citizens' perception of equality – or shall I say rather *inequality*. What are people most worried about? Where do they think EU action can make a difference? And what can we in the European Commission actually do to tackle some of the most pressing issues?

The answers to these questions will be given after the midday briefing.

Now I pass the floor to another really energetic woman: Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen who is ready to take all the tough questions that you might have for the midday!