**Full text of speech.**

Happy Pride Everyone!

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on this glorious Saturday.

We are Family and I am pleased to be here today with all my LGBTQI brothers and sisters.

We are family in all our glorious diversity and common equality.

And as family it is our responsibility to look out for each other and to look after each other.

A family were no one is forgotten, and no one left behind.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

A family whether you live in Derry or Dublin, Tyrone or Tipperary.

We are family and we are all equal.

Love knows no boundaries and respects no borders.

We stand in solidarity to those in the north who are still struggling to have their families recognised in the most basic of ways – marriage equality.

The people here, the people of pride are an unstoppable force. Rights are for all. Equality is for all.

Tá cearta do gach éinne.

Tá comhionannas do chách.

Change is coming and make no mistake the north is next.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

‘We are family’ has other meanings too.

The fight for recognition for LGBTQI families goes on.

I want to commend the activists who continue to demand their parental rights for themselves and their spouses .

The Children and Family Relationships Act needs to be fully implemented now.

Be fully confident that Sinn Féin stands with you in that struggle.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Ireland is changing and you are driving that change.

But we all have a part to play.

Together we delivered marriage equality. Together we delivered repeal of the 8th amendment.

Together we can drive change.

North and south, East and west. We have more to do and further to travel.

The LGBTQI community know all too well about this injustice, about the denial of basic healthcare and about the criminalisation of our bodies.

Healthcare campaigns such as the ‘This Is Me’ campaign fighting for accessible HRT and Act Up! Dublin fighting for accessible PrEP are furthering the cause of equal medical access to the community.

I want to wish them the best for the year ahead.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Ireland is changing.

The old certainties are crumbling. Look around you a new Ireland is emerging. This is your Ireland. And this is your time.

An Ireland in which all our citizens enjoy equality, inclusion and the right to marry the person you love.

The days of living in shadows are long over.

Today, we stand proudly, openly and boldly in the sun and we say;

We are family.

We are not going away

And we will  have full equality.

Is teaghlaigh muid agus beidh comhionannas iomlán again a chairde.

I’ll finish up by giving a special shout out to those attending their first pride here today.

I want to say directly to our younger LGBTQI citizens – look around you.

Feel the love.

Feel the togetherness.

Feel the heroism of all those who have stood here before you.

Keep believing in that brighter future.

Keep building our new Ireland.

And most importantly stay proud.

Bí bródúil!

ENDS