



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Dennis DE JONG

European Parliament, Member
Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, Member
Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, Substitute
Committee on Budgetary Control, Substitute

To: President of the European Commission
cc.: First Vice-President of the European Commission
cc.: President of the European Parliament

Brussels, November 1st

Dear President Juncker,

Commissioners and the revolving door

Congratulations on your appointment as President of the European Commission.

We are writing to you as MEPs, who are committed to setting up a new intergroup of the European Parliament on integrity and against corruption, money laundering and organised crime. Many of us signed the Politics for People pledge co-ordinated by the Alliance for lobbying transparency and ethics regulation (ALTER-EU), to "*stand up for citizens and democracy against the excessive lobbying influence of banks and big business*". Together with ALTER-EU, Transparency International, Rethinking the Future and Open Society, we try to actively promote safeguards for integrity within the European institutions themselves.

Firstly, we very much welcome your commitment made to the European parliament to introduce a mandatory lobby transparency register; this is an important step forward in the campaign for more transparency within the EU institutions.

Secondly, we like to urge you to put in place enhanced mechanisms to prevent a repeat of the revolving door scandals which dominated the end of the previous college of Commissioners in 2009-10. At that time, five out of the departing 13 commissioners moved to industry jobs likely to involve lobbying and this created a lot of negative media attention and public concern.

Since then the code of conduct for commissioners has been revised and this revision included some positive changes. However, we believe that the code of conduct requires further reform in order to meet the highest ethical standards. Such reforms need to be implemented urgently and we propose that they should include the following:

- The notification period for former commissioners should be extended to three years to match the period of time for which ex-commissioners are entitled to receive a transitional allowance.
- The ban on lobbying should also be extended to three years and should be widened to include indirect lobbying and lobbying on all issues for which the Barroso II commission has taken collective decisions.
- The commission should replace the current ad hoc ethical committee with a professional and fully independent ethics committee which would be responsible for, *inter alia*, the assessment of commissioners' proposed new roles.

More generally, we like to know what steps you will now take to ensure that the revolving door rules are strictly adhered to by all departing Commissioners. In her capacity as Secretary-General of the Commission, Catherine Day has previously stated that: "We are committed to ensuring full transparency of these decisions [relating to departing commissioners' new professional activities], whether approving, rejecting or imposing possible restrictions and/ or conditions. We intend to publish these decisions on the Europa website..."

Can you confirm that this will happen, that all documents will be published and that this will happen as soon as a decision has been made and communicated to the Commissioner concerned?

The Parliament's Budgetary Control Committee will devote a special hearing to the EU integrity system, and in that regard it will focus also on the issue of revolving doors. Thus, it would be helpful to receive clarity on your approach with regard to the revolving doors issues before this hearing and the corresponding dialogue with Vice-President Timmermans will take place.

We look forward to hearing from you about these very important and urgent matters.

Yours sincerely,

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 Anne-Marie Mineur (GUE/NGL)
 Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
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 Claude Turmes (Greens/EFA)
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