



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT INTERGROUP
INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY
CORRUPTION AND ORGANISED CRIME

Mr. Frans Timmermans,
European Commissioner for Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, Rule of Law and
Charter of Fundamental Rights

Strasbourg, 16 February 2017

Dear Mr. Timmermans,

As you know, one of the priorities of the ITCO-intergroup is the fight against corruption. The recent Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International shows that the situation in Member States varies considerably and in several Member States, there is reason for serious concern. The protests in Romania against the introduction of a new law which would have had as its effect of granting immunity to public officials who are accused of corruption, show how much alive the issue is in certain Member States. This also appears from Eurobarometer 397, in which citizens mention corruption as one of the most urgent issues the EU should tackle.

Against this background, a report on the situation in Member States seems to be more topical than ever. Moreover, the Commission services participated in a meeting we organised in December in Strasbourg, in which we encouraged the Commission to respect its reporting obligations under the UN Convention against Corruption. Apart from reporting on the situation in Member States, the Commission should have given information to the UN on its anti-corruption policies in respect of the European institutions themselves, but so far it has simply ignored the UNCAC monitoring mechanism, even though the EU is party to this Convention. On that occasion, we got the impression that the Commission is well aware of its obligations and acknowledged the offers from both GRECO and UNODC to help the Commission in this respect in preparing proper reports that could also be subject to peer reviews in the context of UNCAC and GRECO.

We were therefore astonished to read in your letter of 25 January to the chair of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee that there will not be a second anti-corruption report at all but that the Commission intends to deal with anti-corruption policies of Member States in the context of the European economic semester. Our disappointment was also caused by the fact that on 26 September 2016 you only stated in reply to our previous letter on this subject, that no date had yet been set for the publication of the second report and that you were not going to include a chapter on the anti-corruption policies of the European institutions themselves. That was disappointing in itself, but you still gave us the impression that a second report would actually be issued. Moreover, on 13 October 2016 you confirmed in your talk at SDG Watch Europe that such a report would be used to monitor progress toward a just society with accountable institutions.



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From the beginning of your term as Vice-President you gave us the impression that you would fight for transparency and against that background we also gave you a special award, since we put confidence in you and your commitment in this respect. We like to continue to co-operate closely with you and the Commission services, but you can imagine that the recent developments are considered a serious set-back not only by the Bureau Members of our intergroup, but actually by all our members and by many other MEPs. We therefore request an urgent meeting with you to take away any misunderstandings and to see how we can continue to co-operate in a constructive manner to fight corruption in the European Union.

Yours Sincerely,

Dennis de Jong,

co-President ITCO

GUE/NGL

Elly Schlein,

co-President ITCO

S&D

Benedek Jávor

Greens/EFA

Ana Gomes

S&D

Ignazio Corrao

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Marian Harkin

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