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Pierre Moscovici
Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs

Brussels, 24 February 2016

Commissioner
Cher Pierre,

Each year, through the "European Semester", the Commission undertakes a detailed analysis of EU Member States' plans of budgetary, macroeconomic and structural reforms and provides them with recommendations.

In Portugal, it was recently publicized by a former Director General of the Portuguese Tax Authority (2007-2014) that the richest families in the country, which should contribute 25% of state revenues in income tax, contribute only 0.5%, thanks to tax benefits and exemptions granted in full opacity.

Furthermore, as reported by the Portuguese press last year¹, major companies mostly in the oil and energy sector, but also pension funds and banks, with shell companies in the Free Zone of Madeira, Portugal, were recipients of major tax benefits granted by the Portuguese State. In total, 16494 companies benefitted from tax breaks, corresponding to a loss of income to state in the amount of one billion euros in circumstances which are not transparent at all.

In the context of the approval of the Portuguese national budget for 2016, and in the framework of the European Semester recommendations that the Commission intends to put forth to Portugal, I would like to ask you which measures will the Commission propose to increment tax equity and transparency in the budget of the State thus mitigating the cuts in essential public services and reducing the tax burden on the poor and the middle classes, ensuring that more revenue is collected from those who can afford it the most.

Best regards

Ana Gomes

Ana Gomes
Member of the European Parliament

¹ "Portugal concede benefícios fiscais a empresas da Sonangol", VISÃO, 18.11.2015,
<http://visao.sapo.pt/actualidade/economia/2015-11-18-Portugal-concede-beneficios-fiscais-a-empresas-da-Sonangol>.