

FEDERICA MOGHERINI  
HIGH REPRESENTATIVE  
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

JOHANNES HAHN  
MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY AND ENLARGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

Brussels **21 FEB. 2017**  
A(2016) 7024274- 7736348

Ms Ana Gomes MEP  
Ms Rebecca Harms MEP  
Mr Benedek Jávor MEP  
Mr Jaromír Štětina MEP  
European Parliament  
60 rue Wiertz  
1047 Brussels

*Dear colleagues,*

We would like to thank you for your letter of 13 December 2016, which touches upon some of the cases that the EU has been following very closely during the past months.

The EU repeatedly drew attention to the lack of independence of the justice and law enforcement agencies in the Republic of Moldova, also part of the Council Conclusions adopted on 15 February 2016. During the past months we used all opportunities of political dialogue, including high level bilateral meetings, to recall that a fair and impartial adjudication is a core element of a democratic society based on rule of law. In our dialogue with the Moldovan authorities we also highlighted that the principles of independence and impartiality of justice are at the basis of the process of EU-Moldova political association, as foreseen in the Association Agreement.

We have equally used specific bilateral meetings to enquire about individual cases. This was done in particular in the framework of the Human Rights Dialogue held in Brussels on 8 June 2016 and of the Human Rights Expert Consultations held in Chisinau on 12 December 2016. On these occasions we recalled that both judges and lawyers should be able to work under free and fair conditions. In addition, the Heads of Missions representing EU Member States in Chisinau issued a local statement on Human Rights, published on 15 December 2016, focussing in particular on the importance of the right to a fair trial ([https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/17367/local-statement-human-rights-15-december-2016\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/17367/local-statement-human-rights-15-december-2016_en)).

While we cannot intervene directly in legal or judicial proceedings ongoing in the Republic of Moldova, we will continue to use all opportunities to enquire into specific cases and we will not refrain from reminding our partners of the need to ensure the rule of law and adequate protection for the work of human rights lawyers and of judges.

Yours sincerely,

  
Federica Mogherini



Johannes Hahn