

Brussels, October 3rd, 2016

Subject: Conflict of interest situations of current and former Commissioners

Dear President Juncker,

On September 21st, the International Consortium for Investigative Journalism disclosed the fact that Ms Neelie Kroes held a directorship in a firm on the Bahama's, which was in breach with the code of conduct of the Commission.

Not only this incident is a blatant omission on the side of Ms Kroes, it also exemplifies the attitude of many former Commissioners. Mr Mario Monti is a paid advisor to Goldman Sachs. Former trade Commissioner Karel de Gucht is a board member on ArcelorMittal. Barroso, again, accepted a job for Goldman Sachs and Ms Kroes herself is currently on the payroll of the Bank of America, Uber and a number of other boards.

The argument then, is not that Commissioners should never take on private jobs after their career. But when Commissioners accept jobs in fields they ought to regulate shortly after our even during their tenure, this stains the image of the Commission. We call on the Commission to minimise the risk of conflict of interest among current and former Commissioners.

Concretely, we call on the Commission to take the following steps:

- Carry out an extensive assessment of the extent to which there is overlap between the portfolio of all current and former Commissioners and the position they are holding during or after their tenure
- Revise the code of conduct.
 - Include a range of sanctions to be imposed, at the administrative level, where there has been a breach of obligations either by a serving or a former Commissioner. Sanctions can include a cut on pension or transitional allowance entitlements.
 - Install a clear cooling-off period of at least three years for Commissioners.
 - Incoming Commissioners should take on oath in which they swear not to stain the image of the Commission by future practices.
 - Former Commissioners that accept a lobbying job should be deemed lobbyists and should be subject to the registration requirements of ordinary lobbyists. No red carpets.
- Enhance the role of the European Parliament in holding former Commissioners accountable
- The lobby register should be expanded so that every organization registered in the EU discloses information on revolving door practices of their staff

Could the Commission indicate whether it is willing to take these steps and what further measures it proposes to minimise the occurrence of situations of conflict of interest of current and former Commissioners?

Yours sincerely,

Paul Tang
Gianni Pittella
Eric Andrieu
Nikos Androulakis
Guillaume Balas

Brando Benefei
Pervenche Beres
Jose Blanco Lopez
Mercedes Bresso
Nicola Caputo
Sergio Cofferati
Richard Corbett
Andrea Cozzolino
Jean-Paul Denanot
Anneliese Dodds
Knut Fleckenstein
Tanja Fajon
Doru Frunzulica
Iratxe Garcia-Perez
Eider Gardiazabal Rubial
Jens Geier
Ana Gomes
Roberto Gualtieri
Sylvie Guillaume
Sergio Gutierrez Prieto
Ramon Jauregui Atondo
Agnes Jongerius
Jeppe Kofod
Dietmar Koster
Javier Lopez
Andrejs Mamikins
Louis-Joseph Manscour
Emmanuel Maurel
Gilles Pargneaux
Emilian Pavel
Pavel Poc
Kati Piri
Georgi Pirinski
Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy
Virginie Roziere
Alfred Sant
Peter Simon
Isabelle Thomas
Derek Vaughan
Daniele Viotti
Jakob von Weizsacker