



3 April 2018

Jean Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission
Federica Mogherini, Vice President and High Representative
Emily O'Reilly, European Ombudsman
c.c. Gunther Oettinger, Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources

Dear Mr. Juncker, Ms. Mogherini and Ms. O'Reilly,

We are writing to support MEP Gomes' letter of complaint, dated 7th March, about the social media campaign directed against her by Katarina von Schnurbein and someone in the EU delegation to Israel.

We support her demand for for an investigation to determine “whether they violated their duties under the European Commission Staff regulations and the Code of Good Administrative Behaviour and the European Commission's Social media Guidelines for all Staff.”

Specifically, we believe Ms. Von Schnurbein's conduct fell short in two respects.

Firstly, she failed to discriminate between fair comment and antisemitism. It was fair comment for Ms. Gomes to characterise the Jewish groups that wrote to President Tajani and other MEPs as perverse and engaging in intimidatory tactics, because the issue was their behaviour, not their religion. Her comments were not antisemitic because she did not comment in any way on their Jewishness. She commented only on their behaviour.

Secondly, Ms. Von Schnurbein allied herself with the Israel lobby in a very partisan issue. Commission officials should in no circumstances takes side in political issues.

Any MEP has the right to characterise the behaviour of a lobby group negatively if he or she thinks the facts justify it. That the groups in question are Jewish does not render them immune to criticism. That would be a perversion of the protection of free speech. If they feel they have been defamed by Ms. Gomes, they should seek legal remedies.

We believe Ms. Von Schnurbein, and any other officials found to be involved in the campaign, should be severely censured.

Yours sincerely,

Dror Feiler, *Chair, EJJJ ,Judar för Israelisk-Palestinsk Fred, Stockholm*
Arthur Goodman, *Jews for Justice for Palestinians, London*

tel: 00 44 20 8977 5161 (tel), 00 44 7985 912 426 (mobile)
ejjp.eu