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Ms Federica Mogherini  
High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and  
Vice-President of the European Commission

Mr Nicholas Ilett  
Director-General of the European Anti-fraud Office

*Dear Federica,*

Brussels, 25 January 2018

*Dear Mr. Ilett,*

Following the letter that I sent you on 28th September 2017, regarding disturbing rumours on the acquisition of a piece of land from the municipality of Praia by the former EU Ambassador to Cape Verde, Mr José Manuel Pinto Teixeira, I draw now your attention to the Press Release<sup>1</sup> that the municipality of Praia issued on 10th January 2018.

In that Press Release the municipality claims to have sold a piece of land in the prime location of Prainha, with an area of 960, 20 m<sup>2</sup>, for 5.348.677\$00 (equivalent to 50.000€) to Mr José Manuel Pinto Teixeira. It disclosed an undated document purporting to be the contract and another document purporting to be proof of the payment - a bank statement addressed to Mr. Teixeira Pinto noting a transference to the municipality in the amount of 5.500.000\$00, dated 20.2.2017.

So, these elements indicate that the purchase was made at a time when Mr Pinto Teixeira was still in office as EU Ambassador to Cabo Verde, a position he left only by the end of August 2017.

The municipality failed, nevertheless, to explain why it sold this piece of land to the EU Ambassador, in detriment of other interested buyers.

It should be noted that the Municipality Counsellor in charge of Urban Management, Mr. Rafael Fernandes, at a Press Conference held in Praia on January 10th 2018<sup>2</sup>, said that the piece of land was available for purchase since 2015 and that “the only request we had since then was Pinto Teixeira’s”. Directly questioned, he denied that the Embassy of Portugal had ever shown any interest in the piece of land in question. Asked why, then, a public tender had

<sup>1</sup>) <https://www.facebook.com/CMPraia/posts/1787562851274434>

<sup>2</sup>) <https://www.dn.pt/lusa/interior/ex-embaixador-da-ue-foi-unico-interessado-na-compra-de-terreno-em-cabo-verde----autarquia-9037197.html>



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not been launched, Mr Fernandes explained that it was because the buyer was “a diplomat”, despite admitting that, at that same time, public tenders had been opened for commercial spaces sold in the area.

Therefore, the municipality, via Mr. Fernandes acknowledged publicly that Mr. Pinto Teixeira did indeed benefit from a favourable treatment, since he was able to purchase the land without facing competition and without submitting to a public tender. And that just because he was “a diplomat”.

Also, it should be noted that the Embassy of Portugal, in a statement to the “Expresso das Ilhas” on 22th September 2017,<sup>3</sup> reiterated that “since 1978 it has been expressing its interest to acquire this piece of land”, adjacent to its premises. According to the Embassy, at no time were it informed about the availability of the land for sale. The Embassy became aware of the sale of the land on the day the construction work began. It stresses that it also repeatedly expressed to the Municipality of Praia “its concerns regarding the construction set up in the piece of land adjacent to its Residence”, in view of the security, inviolability and privacy guarantees foreseen in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

I urge you to check with the Ambassador of Portugal about the record of contacts between the Embassy and the Municipality of Praia conveying Portugal’s interest in purchasing the land adjacent to their premises, to extend its security perimeter.

I would also like to call your attention to the allegation that the authorization for building in the land in question, as granted by the Municipality to Mr Pinto Teixeira, violates the norms laid down in decree law 14/2016 of March 1st<sup>4</sup>, which establishes the need to respect 80 meters of protection distance from the coast line for any construction. It appears that the house being built by Mr Teixeira Pinto violates the 80 metres of the maritime public domain, since it is located just a few meters away from the shoreline<sup>5</sup>.

*Best regards,*  
*Ana Gomes*

Ana Gomes, MEP

<sup>3</sup> ) <https://www.facebook.com/Embaixada-de-Portugal-em-Cabo-Verde-848427925285689/>

<sup>4</sup> ) Decree law 14/2016 of 1st March (Coastal and Maritime planning).

<sup>5</sup> ) Photo in attachment