



Jean-Claude JUNCKER
President of the European Commission

Rue de la Loi, 200
B-1049 Brussels
Tel. +32 2 295 50 33
jean-claude.juncker@ec.europa.eu

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Dear Honourable Member, *João*

Thank you for your letter of 19 June 2018, which was also addressed to the President of the European Council, Mr Donald Tusk, and the Vice-President and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Ms Federica Mogherini, concerning the US Administration's policy of separating migrant children from their parents at the border.

The EU remains committed to a strong partnership with the US. However, as I have made clear, the EU must and will stand up in defence of its values as well as its interests.

The policy of separation of migrant children has raised widespread concern, in the US, in the EU and beyond. The EU's values must mean that the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrant children, regardless of their status, must be protected. Migration policy should always be consistent with the fundamental values of dignity, respect for human rights and protection of all children.

The EU has in place a strong policy of protection when it comes to children in situations of migration. The best interests of the child should always be the primary consideration.

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Ms Ana GOMES, MEP
European Parliament
Rue Wiertz, 60
1047 BRUSSELS

E-mail: anamaria.gomes@europarl.europa.eu

As you will be aware, the US Administration took action through an executive order on 20 June 2018, stopping the practice of separating migrant children from their parents. However, the process of reunification of the 2,300 separated children with their parents still has to be fully clarified. The EU Delegation in Washington is closely following developments and we will continue to give this matter particular attention.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive letter 'A' followed by a long horizontal stroke that curves upwards at the right end.