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Jerzy Buzek
President
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Dear Mr President,

In accordance with Rule 106 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) held a public hearing on 19 January 2010 with the Commissioner-designate, Cecilia Malmström, who will be responsible for the portfolio of Home Affairs.

Prior to this hearing the Parliament had sent a list of written questions as well as a list of priorities submitted by our committee relating to this area of responsibility.

The course of the hearing

The hearing opened with an introductory statement of the Commissioner-designate, followed by a first round of questions from all the political groups and from a representative of the non-attached Members.

In her introductory statement of almost 11 minutes, the Commissioner-designate referred, amongst others, to the Lisbon Treaty, the Stockholm Programme and its implementation, the citizens' expectations towards EU action in her area of competence, a common policy for legal and illegal immigration and for asylum as well as for the necessity of effective protection of the EU's external borders and last but not least the fight against organised crime and terrorism.

The LIBE Committee, as the Committee responsible, asked 27 questions. Representatives of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) and of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL), both participating in the hearing, asked three questions each. The transcription of the hearing is attached.

Evaluation

As far as the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs is concerned, it considers:

That the Commissioner designate is suitable for the mandate proposed by President Barroso. As far as the competences of the committee are concerned, the candidate showed a clear commitment to make a general and objective assessment of the internal security related policies until now developed under the EU responsibility so that they could become consistent, effective and comply with both the security needs of EU citizens as well

as fundamental rights protection in particular as far as data protection is concerned. This evaluation should be carried out by associating and informing the European Parliament on the same basis as the Council of the European Union. The Committee also appreciates the candidate's commitment for closer police co-operation, as well as to pursue action against organised crime and terrorism quickly, reviewing comprehensively the tools that already exist, before initiating new legislation.

On the basis of the Commissioner designate's statements today, the committee expects that she will endeavour to establish an EU legal and illegal migration and asylum policy as a priority and compliant with the objectives outlined in the Treaty and in the Stockholm programme. The committee shares the legislative priorities outlined by the Commissioner designate and expects a strong commitment and the presentation of appropriate legislative and budgetary proposals fleshing out the principle of solidarity between Member States and to strengthen efforts on stronger co-operation with third countries, notably on readmission agreements and to reduce incentives for immigration.

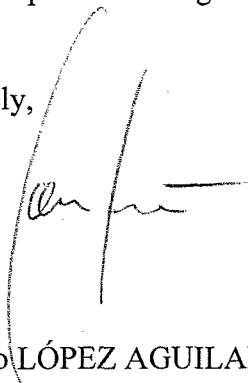
Together with the EMPL delegation, LIBE welcomes in particular her assurance that she will place emphasis on the protection of the rights of legal immigrants, monitor the implementation of the directive on sanctions against the employers of illegal immigrants as well as the directive on common standards and procedures for returning illegally staying third-country nationals and to submit the directive on the seasonal workers and on intra-corporate transferees. The Committee also notes that the Commissioner-designate declared her availability to work with the EP for a common set of rights for regular migrants.

The committee welcomes her commitment to carefully evaluate the state of implementation of the EU border policies and will associate the EP in building the new legislative and operation framework. As stated by the Commissioner designate, attention should be given to the swift transition to SISII and to the implementation of the VIS.

The committee appreciates her strong personal and political commitment for gender issues. LIBE and the FEMM delegation consider that Mrs Malmström showed - in her answers to the specific questions raised - a very good knowledge of the issues and of the links her portfolio has with those of other Commissioners and with the competences of the Member States. Her replies to the questions relating to asylum, human trafficking and female genital mutilation (FGM) have been highly appreciated.

As a general profile Mrs Malmström is a promising candidate who showed strong integrity, commitment and openness and has all the qualities to take on the job as Commissioner and specifically the portfolio assigned to her by President Barroso.

Yours sincerely,



Juan Fernando LÓPEZ AGUILAR
LIBE Chair