

Committee on Development  
The Chair

301540 03.02.2010

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr Jerzy BUZEK  
President  
European Parliament  
Brussels

ACCES RESERVE

Dear Mr President,

In accordance with Rule 106 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, the Committee on Development held a public hearing on Wednesday 3 February 2010 with Ms Kristalina Georgieva, Commissioner-designate, who, subject to the positive outcome of the nomination procedure, will be responsible for international cooperation, humanitarian aid and crisis response.

Prior to the hearing, Parliament had sent the Commissioner-designate a list of written questions. My committee noted that Ms Georgieva answered those questions and dealt with the priorities outlined satisfactorily.

Ms Georgieva opened the hearing by making a statement in which she referred to the following:

- that she will strongly promote the priorities agreed in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid including more efficient, neutral and impartial aid, a better response capacity and improved coordination within the EU and between humanitarian and military actors;
- that she will advocate for the respect of International Humanitarian Law and speak up when humanitarian workers are killed, prisoners are abused and sexual violence is used as a weapon of war;
- that she will do her very best to deliver on commitments to disaster reduction and to build capacity to cope with the humanitarian impact of climate change;
- that she will review and strengthen the Civil Protection Instrument;
- that she will work with her colleagues in the College of Commissioners to ensure effective use of resources and to improve the coordination of EU actions.

During the debate, Ms Georgieva made specific commitments regarding her future Commission portfolio:

- that she would seek to move to a more structured approach to civil protection, including a discussion with Member States about how to proceed when their resources are committed for their domestic needs;
- that her role in international cooperation would be primarily focussed on the sector of humanitarian aid, working towards a more pro-active approach for disaster preparedness and response using regional organisations among other international actors;
- that she firmly believes in accountability for the NGO partners with which the Commission works to deliver humanitarian aid and would cease working with NGOs that did not deliver, either on the ground or in terms of financial probity;
- that she supports a holistic approach to the link between reconstruction, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) which takes account of the development circumstances of the individual countries concerned;
- that she believes very strongly in transparency and accountability and would do everything she could to ensure respect for these principles in the use of funds and to change any systems which fail to achieve this;
- that she would engage with Member State Foreign and Defence Ministers to discuss the role of the military in humanitarian operations and that she would appeal for the good offices of the High Representative / Vice President for Foreign Affairs to this end;
- that she stresses the importance of the principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence from political considerations for humanitarian aid operations;
- that within the Action Plan under the Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, she hopes to continue to work particularly on coordination and on the interface between military and civilian actions;
- that there is a need to be more creative in the mobilisation of resources to meet needs and that the example of disaster insurance put in place in Haiti may be useful in this respect;
- that political judgement is required in determining the appropriate moment to end a humanitarian response, since a prolonged humanitarian presence can have negative consequences holding back longer-term development;
- that aid must not be delivered in a way that very visibly blurs the line between military and humanitarian workers, but debate and discussion is required for cases which are less clear;
- that as a last resort, the military can be very helpful for humanitarian action, but this must be done very carefully since it can place in question the neutrality and independence of humanitarian workers so assessments must be made according to the individual circumstances of each situation;
- that on the subject of possible trafficking of children in emergency situations she can join with UNICEF to speak out about these dangers;
- that she would assess whether a European monitoring centre on drought, desertification and floods would be useful;

- that in situations, such as Eastern Congo, where women are subject to sexual violence, humanitarian actions should be carried out with a view to ensuring the security of women and the problem may also be addressed by advocating with the UN and other international organisations for more strongly-worded statements by world leadership;
- that advocacy against sexual violence is important, but it is not enough: what matters is that people be held to account and this is particularly true for cases where international workers engage in sexual abuses;
- that 2011, the European Year of Volunteering, is a good time to establish the European Union Voluntary Humanitarian Corps but this must not be funded from the aid budget and consideration must be given to designing the Corps without risking their safety or incurring additional costs for their protection;
- that she will advocate for attention in EU development policy to those factors which may reduce the risk of disasters;
- that she would ensure that the problem of access to Gaza would be high on the agenda in discussions in the College of Commissioners and in discussions between the Commissioners responsible for external relations;
- that the budget for humanitarian aid is sacred: there must be no blurring of the line between humanitarian aid resources and resources for civil protection in any other field, so these budgets must be kept separate;
- that she has to be accountable to Parliament, will seek the advice of Parliament and will take seriously her responsibility to attend multilateral parliamentary assemblies where her presence is useful.

Before the end of the hearing, the Commissioner-designate made a brief closing statement in which she added that she would follow-up on everything that had been discussed at the hearing.

On the basis of the responses of the Members present at the hearing, as well as the comments made by my committee's coordinators, who met after the hearing under my chairmanship, I hereby give the following assessment:

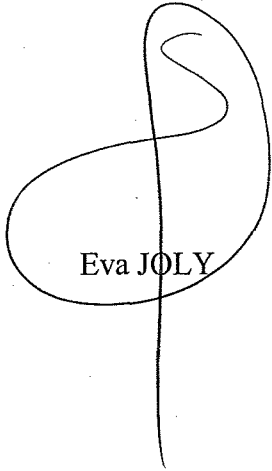
The Commissioner-designate was assessed for her personal qualifications (integrity and independence, professional aptitude and experience), her European commitment, her ability to communicate and initiative, her commitments on cooperating for Parliament and its committees and her aptitude as regards her specific policy area. She acquitted herself outstandingly well, especially considering the short time that she had been given for preparation. Her answers were coherent and showed extensive knowledge and good communication skills as well as the impartiality necessary for the portfolio of humanitarian aid.

The Coordinators of the Committee on Development expect the Commissioner-designate to engage pro-actively with Parliament and to make herself available for discussions with this institution. They also trust that she will cooperate effectively with her colleagues in the College of Commissioners while maintaining full responsibility for her own portfolio.

The general outcome of this hearing is that the Commissioner-designate gave a very convincing impression of her aptitude to be a member of the College of Commissioners and is particularly suited to carry out the specific tasks assigned to her.

This represents the unanimous opinion of all the Coordinators of the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a vertical line with a large loop on the left side and a smaller loop on the right side.

Eva JOLY