



Brussels, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Dear President Jean Claude Juncker,

The Alliance for Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation (ALTER-EU) has closely followed the ethics violations and revolving doors moves by former European commissioners. We understand from your interview in last Saturday's Le Soir that you will present to the College of Commissioners proposals to reform the Code of Conduct. We now call upon you to show strong political leadership and to use this reform to prevent future ethics scandals.

The quick succession of scandals that we have witnessed in the past few months, from former Commission President Barroso, to Vice-President Neelie Kroes and Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner, show that there is a systemic problem with the design and enforcement of the present rules. The limited extension of the current rules which you outlined to Le Soir would not change that. Stronger steps are necessary to avoid further reputational damage for European institutions in a time when citizens are rapidly losing their trust in the EU.

In our view, there are crucial measures that must be agreed and implemented to make the Code of Conduct as effective as possible:

- The notification period for ex-commissioners must be extended to at least three years
- There should be a ban on former commissioners to prevent them from taking lobby jobs (or other jobs which provoke the risk of a conflict of interest) for at least three years after they have left the Commission
- Former presidents must be held at a higher standard and obey a five years notification and lobby ban period
- The Code must include a definition of "lobbying" that covers both direct and indirect influencing activities
- The ad-hoc ethics committee must be replaced by an ethics body which is permanent, professional, transparent and fully independent, with investigatory and decision-making powers
- There should be full transparency around revolving doors moves including the publication of opinions and a requirement to include revolving door hires in the Transparency Register.

We urge you to take into consideration the growing consensus for a much stricter code of conduct. These include the European Ombudsman who asked you to amend the

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code to ensure it reflects the “underlying spirit and intent of the relevant Treaty article”, and the European Parliament that has just approved a partial budget freeze until the Commission adopts a “stricter code of conduct”. Above all we urge you listen to the 214,000 citizens that have demanded urgent action to block the Commission’s revolving doors.

We are keenly awaiting for the conclusions of tomorrow’s Code of Conduct discussion and hope that it will lead to effective and meaningful reforms.

Yours sincerely,

Margarida Silva, on behalf of the Alliance for Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation (ALTER-EU)