

Dacian CIOLOȘ

*Member of the European Commission*

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DC/SO ck (2014)587750

*Honourable Members,*

*Thank you very much for the letter dated 17 February 2014 which has retained my full attention. I am glad to read that we share the same view on the importance of the permanent dialogue the Commission is having with civil society.*

*As you know, over the past few years Commission departments have made significant efforts to improve the implementation of Commission's rules on expert groups, including on the composition of these groups. Substantial progress achieved was recognised by both the European Parliament, which in September 2012 lifted the reserve it has previously placed on the EU budget for 2012, and by the European Ombudsman who in December 2013 closed her inquiry into a complaint lodged against the Commission on expert groups. Initiatives carried out obviously reflected existing rules on expert groups, as complemented by additional commitments taken by the Commission in March 2012 in response to the above-mentioned Parliament's reserve. For the sake of clarity, I should also underline that Vice-President Šefčovič expressed the Commission's intention to ensure full implementation of the above-mentioned provisions and commitments, but did not make any other pledges.*

*I agree with you that in the case of DG AGRI the advisory groups need to be adapted to the structure of the reformed CAP. In particular, we have undertaken a genuine bottom-up approach with the involvement of all stakeholders in a survey in 2012 and a public consultation in 2013. At the end of this inclusive process, the Commission adopted its framework decision 2013/767/EU on 16 December 2013 which has entrusted the Director General of DG AGRI to decide about the set-up, size and composition of the new groups. As already mentioned, the new system should reflect the reformed CAP, and the economic and non-economic interests should be represented in a balanced way.*

*In line with the Commission decision DG AGRI is going to publish soon calls for applications for each of the prospected new civil dialogue groups. This process intends to ensure that the composition of each of the groups, based on the outcome of the calls, will be balanced as stipulated in the decision.*

*I hope this letter clarifies the process and addresses your concerns. I am looking forward to continuing our constructive dialogue about this issue and hope that I will be able to count on your support in the future.*

*Yours sincerely,*



*Via e-mail to Members of Parliament Lepage, De Jong, Simpson, Cashman, Macovei, Trüpel, Staes, Eickhout, Pietikäinen, Poc, Färm, Kadenbach, Arsenis, McAvan, Zannoni, Bélier, Auken, Rivasi, Greze, Chrysogelos, Evans*

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