

From: **SASSOLI David, President** <President@europarl.europa.eu>

Date: Wed, 16 Sep 2020 at 11:13

Subject: RE: Letter to President Sassoli on Europe's recovery after the pandemic and civil society D(26271)

To: Carlotta BESOZZI

Dear Ms Besozzi,

Thank you for your email in which you transmit me the letter signed by 50 Platforms of civil society organisations and supported by the European Public Services Union on Europe's recovery Plan and civil society.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has confronted us with a human tragedy and an unprecedented health and economic crisis. Many people lost their jobs and are hit by economic hardship. A great number of companies are facing economic difficulties or even go bankrupt. Vulnerable groups and people in vulnerable situations are likely to be particularly affected. Through their quick reaction and tireless work, civil society organisations and volunteers have been playing a crucial role in the efforts to mitigate the effects of the crisis. The European Parliament pays tribute to these organisations and volunteers and to all others who stand in the frontline fighting the pandemic and who fulfil essential duties to maintain public life and services, guarantee access to essential goods and protect the most vulnerable.

Over the past few months, Parliament has done everything in its powers to contribute to cushioning the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on our societies and economies. We held numerous debates and adopted a great number of urgent legislative initiatives as well as resolutions stressing the need for a fast and fair economic and social recovery. As the EU's only directly elected institution, the Parliament has close links to, and greatly values a vibrant, civil society. It is therefore of utmost importance for us to make sure that the EU's response to the current crisis addresses the needs of civil society.

In its resolution of 17 April 2020 on *EU coordinated action to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences*, the European Parliament underlined that Europe needs to show solidarity and use all available means in order to swiftly deploy financial assistance to the regions and businesses most affected. It is of utmost importance that Europe and its Member States take all possible measures to keep as many jobs as possible and to ensure that the recovery is based on upward social economic convergence, social dialogue and improved social rights and working conditions with targeted measures for those in precarious forms or work. Aid and crisis-mitigation measures for the most vulnerable citizens must be prioritised.

Regarding the new multiannual financial framework (MFF), own resources and the recovery plan, the resolution of 15 May 2020 and of 23 July 2020 recalled that citizens must be at the heart of the recovery strategy and insisted that the revamped MFF and Europe's recovery

strategy should be based on the principles of economic and territorial cohesion, social dialogue and transformation towards a resilient, sustainable, socially just and competitive economy. Europe needs a massive recovery package to transform our economies and strengthen their resilience through the pooling of strategic investments to support SMEs and to increase job opportunities and skills to mitigate the impact of the crisis on workers, consumers and families. It is therefore important that investments are prioritised into the Green Deal and the digital agenda and to achieve European sovereignty in strategic sectors. In this resolution, MEPs also considered it crucial that these efforts have a strong social dimension and be aligned with the objectives of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and the objective of gender equality, so as to ensure that the recovery strengthens territorial cohesion and competitiveness, and that it addresses social and economic inequalities and the needs of those hit hardest by the crisis, such as women, minorities and those on or below the poverty line. Let me also underline that Parliament is insisting that the future MFF is sufficiently endowed so that long-term priorities can be tackled and that the investments in the immediate recovery do not put in danger sufficient investments in the next generation.

The European Council has agreed on 21 July on a package of initiatives aimed at addressing the consequences of the crisis, including in the form of a Recovery Plan and a new multi-annual budget of ambitious dimensions to cope with the reconstruction and recovery of European economies.

The European Parliament is now starting to assess this proposal, and will ensure to place innovative and ambitious ideas at the core of the policy decisions supported by this package, also reflecting the requests it has voiced on many occasions since the start of the pandemic. Let me thank you again for your valuable work and assure you that the European Parliament is doing everything in its powers to make sure that the concerns of our citizens are at the core of EU policy making and that the EU's recovery package as well as other future initiatives address the needs of civil society.

Yours sincerely,

David SASSOLI