Game over - EU Commission test

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News | 22.10.2014

Commission Test

Blog on the nominations and hearings for the new Commission



Welcome to our blog. It will provide you with the Greens/EFA analysis of the proposed EU commissioners, their remits and the hearings, as well as links to the livestreams of the hearings themselves.

Hearings

- Overview and timetable of hearings

Wednesday 22.10.2014
Press release - Greens not convinced by overall package of Juncker College

The Greens/EFA group today voted against the Juncker Commission because they are not convinced the overall package and policy direction presented by president Juncker is what is needed re-establish the trust of our citizens in the nascent European democracy. The Greens/EFA believe he has got the priorities wrong ...

- Read the press release

Wednesday 22.10.2014
Plenary speech by Rebecca Harms - Presentation of the College of Commissioners and their programme

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Monday 20.10.2014
Greens/EFA motion for a resolution on the election of the Commission

The Green/EFA welcome Mr Juncker's efforts to build a more political Commission and shares many of the president-elect's concerns regarding the dire state of the Union today. Nevertheless our Group considers that this College has got the priorities wrong; that the overall composition, the allocation of key-portfolios and above all the policy direction are not what Europeans need to face Europe's deep social and environmental crisis and meet the challenges of this century.

- Download the document (PDF)

Monday 20.10.2014 - 19:00-22:00
Violeta BULC - Transport

Passable performance but substandard on key green issues
Greens/EFA Transport coordinator Karima Delli assesses commissioner-designate for transport, Violeta Bulc

Given the time Mrs. Bulc had to prepare, her performance was passable. She displayed an open, straight-forward attitude and showed some knowledge on transport policy. However, her answers on all key green issues she was asked about were substandard.

- Read Karima's assessment

Monday 20.10.2014 - 19:00-22:00
Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ – Energy Union

- Greens/EFA Members on the Environment Committee (ENVI)
- Greens/EFA Members on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)

Tuesday 14.10
Second Greens/EFA letter to Mr Juncker on sustainability in the new European Commission

In a first letter dated 26 September, Greens/EFA expressed their concerns about the political priorities for the new College, underlining the inconsistency of any economic policy that does not have sustainability as its central focus. While no response was received from Mr Juncker, the Greens/EFA have learned that Vice-President Frans Timmermans wil have 'sustainable development' added to the responsibilities under his portfolio.

- Read the second letter to Mr Juncker on sustainability
- **Read the answer by Mr Juncker (dated 15.10)**

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Monday 13.10
Greens/EFA letter to Mr Juncker about possible new authorisations of genetically modified organisms by the outgoing European Commission

The Greens/EFA group has written to incoming Commission president Juncker asking that he intervene to ensure there are no new authorisations of genetically modified organisms by the outgoing European Commission. The initiative comes on the back of news that EU trade commissioner De Gucht is seeking to secure 8 new GMO authorisations, with a view to convincing the United States authorities to ease restrictions on some imports from the EU.

- **Read the letter to Mr Juncker on possible new GMO authorizations**
- **Read the answer by Mr Juncker (dated 15.10.2014)**

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Thursday 09.10
About-turn on Medicines Agency ensures patients remain the priority

Some welcome news today as it has been announced that the European Medicines Agency will remain with the directorate general for health and consumers. This agency is responsible for the evaluation and supervision of medicines in the EU and President-elect Juncker had tried to shift responsibility for it to the EU Commission's directorate general for enterprise. A similar attempt was made in 2009 but this was unsuccessful. We wrote to Mr. Juncker to present the real concerns that the regulation of medicines would be approached from a predominantly commercial perspective, instead of with a view to prioritising the interests of patients. Thankfully, this move has now been reversed

- Read our reaction in full from Green MEP **Michèle Rivasi**

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Wednesday 08.10
Cosy deal ensures problematic candidates get green light in spite of theatrics

Statement by Bas Eickhout after the vote

Statement by Claude Turmes after the vote

The relevant European Parliament committees voted on the remaining candidates for the European Commission for whom decision had been outstanding. The Greens/EFA group expressed regret that a pre-agreed deal between the bigger groups in the European Parliament meant some majorly problematic candidates were approved, despite not having resolved the issues they were facing.

- Read the comments on the outcome by the Greens/EFA co-presidents

_____ **TUESDAY 07.10**

Tuesday 07.10 14:30-17:30
Frans TIMMERMANS - Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights

Statement of Greens/EFA co-president **Philippe Lamberts** following the hearing of Commissioner-designate Frans Timmermanns: *"Frans Timmermans is undeniably a competent politician and a man of*

conviction. Unlike many of the other candidates heard by Parliament, he has the calibre necessary to join the European Commission and become its number two. His commitment to ensure all Member States comply with fundamental rights is encouraging. However, there are other aspects of his agenda, brought to light by his past statements, which remain worrying: has he in fact come to Brussels to weaken, in the name of subsidiarity and cutting red tape, the EU's ability to regulate markets and multinationals? We will be paying close attention to this area."

- The Gatekeeper of Berlaymont - Ten questions for Timmermans

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Tuesday 07.10.2014 13:00-14:30
Additional hearing - Jonathan HILL - Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union

- Greens/EFA MEPS of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON)

Tuesday 07.10 10:00-13:00
Jyrki KATAINEN - Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness

- Greens/EFA MEPS of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON)
- Greens/EFA MEPs of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee (EMPL)
- Greens/EFA Members on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)

MONDAY 6 OCTOBER 2014

Monday 06.10 18:30-21:30
Andrus ANSIP - Digital Single Market

Jan Philipp Albrecht assesses Andrus Ansip

Julia Reda assesses Andrus Ansip

Greens/EFA MEP Julia Reda Hausling gives our assessment of Commissioner designate Andrus Ansip. He seemed well informed about most topics addressed in the hearing, especially when compared to the hearing with GÃ¼nther Oettinger, the other Commissioner on digital affairs.

- Read the Greens/EFA assessment of Mr. Ansip

Monday 06.10
Vote in Legals Affairs Committee on Arias Cañete - The fossil fuel lobbies have nothing to worry about

The European Parliament's Legal affairs committee today met behind closed doors at the request of the committees dealing with issues of energy and climate to urgently review Miguel Arias Cañete declaration of financial interests. Commenting on this meeting, Greens/EFA MEP Pascal Durand stated: *Developments tonight represent a major setback for a democratic and transparent Europe. The oil lobbies have nothing to worry about, as they clearly have strong allies in the European Parliament. The Legal affairs committee, which held an emergency meeting tonight to review any potential conflicts of family interests with regard to*

Mr Cañete candidacy, contented itself, at the request of its Chair and a majority of the two major groups in the Parliament European, with simply carrying out a formal review of Mr Cañete statements. The Legal affairs committee, despite a demand from the Greens which was supported by MEPs committed to transparency and the idea of an exemplary federal Europe, refuses to perform the least of its duties, which is to check whether a commissioner in charge of issues of energy and climate can be directly involved, through his family, in oil companies. It is now up to the parliamentary committees concerned with climate and energy issues to decide." _____

Monday 06.10 18:30-21:30
Federica MOGHERINI
High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy and Security Policy - Vice- President

Green MEP Barbara Lochbihler gives our assessment of the hearing of proposed High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy and Security Policy Federica Mogherini. All in all, Federica Mogherini left a rather positive impression. She was able to answer most questions and showed good knowledge of the different dossiers. However, on many issues including a few raised by the Greens, she remained quite vague and imprecise.

- **Read the Greens/EFA assessment of Ms Mogherini**

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Monday 06.10
Culture committee says Tibor Navracsics not suitable for Culture, Education and Civil Society portfolio

The European Parliament's Culture Committee voted tonight that Commissioner-designate Tibor Navracsics (Hungary) was not suitable for the culture, education and civil society portfolio. Green MEP **Michel Reimon** commented: "Navracsics" participation in the Orbán government, responsible for a very controversial and problematic media law led a majority of the committee to find him unsuitable for the portfolio of culture, education and civil society. Navracsics was indeed confirmed today as Commissioner, but not for the portfolio Mr. Juncker assigned him. Clearly, Hungary may provide a Commissioner, as any other country. Nevertheless, Parliament must not accept any candidate for any position - otherwise the hearings have no meaning. In this sense, a majority has acted and decided."

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Monday 06.10 14:30-17:30
Valdis DOMBROVSKIS - Euro and Social Dialogue

A lesson well recited

Sven Giegold, Jean Lambert and Monika Vana assess commissioner-designate Dombrovskis At first glance, Valdis Dombrovskis made an acceptable performance during his hearing. But when you scratch the surface his presentation seemed more like a well-rehearsed recital of a neoliberal version of a Juncker lesson. It remains to be seen if his prolific use of social trigger words will now be turned into commitments and actions.

- Read Sven's, Jean's and Monika's assessment

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Monday 06.10 14:30-17:30
Alenka BRATUSEK - Energy Union

Mrs. Bratusek's perfomance today leaves us in the fog. Imprecise, not prepared and unclear are the words

that come to mind following the hearing. Watch Green MEP Claude Turmes' initial reaction

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THURSDAY 02.10.2014



Thursday 02.10 18:00-21:00
Margarethe VESTAGER - Competition

- Greens/EFA MEPs of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON)

Thursday 02.10 13:30-16:30
Kristalina GEORGIEVA - Budget and Human Resources

- Greens/EFA MEPs of the Legal Affairs Committee (JURI)
- Greens/EFA MEPs of the Budget Committee (BUDG)
- Greens/EFA MEPs of the Budgetary Control Committee (CONT)

Thursday 02.10 13:30-16:30
Elzbieta BIENKOWSKA - Internal Market, Industry, SMEs & Entrepreneurship

- Greens/EFA MEPs on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)
- Greens/EFA MEPs of the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee (IMCO)

Thursday 02.10 9:00-12:00
Pierre MOSCOVICI - Economic & Financial Affairs, Taxation & Customs Union

- Greens/EFA MEPs of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON)

Thursday 02.10 9:00-12:00
Phil HOGAN - Agriculture and Rural Development

Green MEP Martin Hausling gives our assessment of Commissioner designate Phil Hogan. Great showmanship during the hearings but the content of his answers represents a truly awful perspective for the future of small farmers and rural communities.

- **Read the Greens/EFA assessment of the hearing of Mr. Hogan**

WEDNESDAY 01.10.2014



Wednesday 01.10.2014 18:00 - 21:00
Miguel Arias Cañete - Climate Action and Energy

Cañete: not fit for the job

Green MEPs Bas Eickhout and Claude Turmes deem energy and climate commissioner-designate Cañete unsuitable. He has failed to allay the serious concerns about the conflicts of interest regarding his nomination as EU climate and energy commissioner, notably the continued involvement of his brother-in-law in the oil industry. For the Greens/EFA group, his candidacy is clearly untenable.

- Read the Greens/EFA assessment of the hearing of Mr Cañete

Wednesday 01.10.2014 18:00 - 21:00
Tibor NAVRACSICS - Education, Culture, Youth and Citizenship

He is a very talkative and eloquent person, but absolutely not ready for any self criticism and not ready to admit his role in the introduction of the media freedom hobbling law in Hungary. He was not concrete on any point and misunderstood some questions (...)

- **Read the Greens/EFA assessment of the Tibor Navracsics hearing**

Wednesday 01.10.2014 13:30-16:30
Jonathan HILL - Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union

- Greens/EFA MEPS of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON)

Wednesday 01.10.2014 13:30-16:30
Věra JOUROVA - Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality

Vera Jourová did not explain how she would defend her portfolio within the Commission itself. However, she demonstrated clear awareness of the current state of the political process of key dossiers in her agenda (...)

- **Read the Greens/EFA assessment of Věra Jourova's hearing**

Wednesday 01.10.2014 09:00-12:00
Corina CRETU - Regional Policy

Under Vice-President Katainen' s supervision? Ms. Cretu was good on the content and general line of her portfolio while also very open. She has experience as an MEP and wants to cooperate with the European Parliament, and in general continue the line of her predecessor Johannes Hahn. She was however weak on important topics for us such as the Green Economy, Green Jobs and Public Services (...)

- **Read the Greens/EFA assessment of the hearing of Corina CRETU**

Wednesday 01.10.2014 09:00-12:00
Marianne THYSSEN - Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility

- Greens/EFA MEPs of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee (EMPL)

Tuesday 30.09.2014



Tuesday 30.09.2014 18:00-21:00
Christos STYLIANIDES - Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management

- Greens/EFA Members of the Committee on Development (DEVE)

Tuesday 30.09.2014 18:00-21:00
Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ - Transport and Space

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ performed better than expected and had a surprisingly detailed knowledge of a broad range of issues. He clearly is an experienced diplomat and avoided difficult questions skilfully. His emphasis on social issues, enforcement and transport safety was welcomed. However, (...)

- **Read the Greens/EFA assessment of the hearing of Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ**

Tuesday 30.09.2014 13:30-16:30
Dimitris AVRAMOPOULOS - Migration and Home Affairs

Experienced Politician

Green MEP Judith Sargentini gives a cautiously positive assessment of the EP hearing with Dimitris Avramopoulos and Migration and Home Affairs under the new Commission.

- Read the Greens/EFA assessment of Dimitris Avramopoulos, following his EP hearing

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Tuesday 30.09.2014 13:30-16:30
Johannes HAHN - Neighbourhood policy and Enlargement

- Greens/EFA Members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET)

Tuesday 30.09.2014 9:00-12:00
Vytenis ANDRIUKAITIS - Health and Food Safety

Our health and food in safe hands? He clearly is very committed to addressing threats to health. He is authentic, sincere, very energetic and eager to do the right thing, but probably a bit naïve about what he can achieve in the new Commission. He has a good general understanding of health issues, as well as expert knowledge on certain issues due to his background as a medical specialist (...)

- Greens/EFA assessment of the hearing of Vytenis Andriukaitis

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Tuesday 30.09.2014 9:00-12:00
Carlos MOEDAS - Research, Science and Innovation

A smooth but maybe too cautious operator Mr Moedas certainly is an experienced politician and a smooth operator. He avoided the danger zones. He did not trip up, did not offend, he told a convincing European story about himself. Where he stands on a lot of issues of substance remains to be seen. He was too cautious to commit to specific positions. (...)

- Greens/EFA assessment of the hearing of Carlos Moedas

Monday 29.09.2014



Monday 29.09.2014 18:30-21:30
Neven MIMICA - International Cooperation and Development

- Greens/EFA Members on Development Committee (DEVE)

Monday 29.09.2014 18:30-21:30
Günther OETTINGER - Digital Economy and Society

- Greens/EFA Members on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)
- Greens/EFA Members on the Culture Committee (CULT)

Reaction coming soon

Monday 29.09.2014 14:30-17:30
Karmenu VELLA - Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Fit for the job of environment and fisheries commissioner?

Greens/EFA environment spokesperson Bas Eickhout and fisheries spokesperson Isabella Lövin give their assessment of the European Parliament hearing with Karmenu Vella, EU commissioner-designate for the environment and fisheries.
His performance as such was ok, but he certainly did not give the impression of being committed to or wanting to fight for environment protection. He explicitly refrained from making any commitments (...)

- **Read the Greens/EFA assessment of Karmenu Vella, following his EP hearing**

Monday 29.09.2014 14:30-17:30
Cecilia MALMSTRÖM - Trade

New trade Commissioner ?

According to Greens/EFA trade coordinator Yannick Jadot, Cecilia Malmström was obviously well briefed on the trade dossier. But unfortunately, she has fallen completely into the line and footsteps of

her predecessor, Karel de Gucht.
She recited briefings from the EU Commission's directorate general for trade too frequently and did not open any new perspective on trade policy (...)

- **Read the Greens/EFA assessment of Cecilia Malmström, following her EP hearing**

Letters to Mr Juncker, President-elect



26.09.2014 - Sustainability and the environment under Team Juncker - Open letter

With the European Parliament set to vet the College of Commissioners proposed by president-elect Jean-Claude Juncker, Greens/EFA group co-presidents Rebecca Harms and Philippe Lamberts give a sceptical assessment of Team Juncker and its possible implications for EU policy in key areas like sustainable growth and the environment.

- **Read the** blog and the letter to Mr Juncker on sustainability

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24.09.2014 - Letter from Greens/EFA Co-Presidents on Commissioner-designate Miguel Arias CaÃ±ete

The Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament has written to European Commission president-elect Juncker to highlight concerns with commissioner-designate Miguel Arias Cañete's candidacy, notably as regards certain conflicts of interest. Despite the gravity of the accusations, Mr. Juncker's bureaucratic 3-line response does not address these concerns in the least.

- Read the letter on Commissioner-designate Miguel Arias Cañete
- **Read Mr Juncker's reply to the Greens/EFA letter on Mr Cañete's candidacy**

Reactions to the presentation of the candidates

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy and Security Policy



Green MEP Barbara Lochbihler assess the proposed High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy and Security Policy Federica Mogherini. The initial impression is positive and her commitment to the need to engage globally for the protection of human rights is encouraging. The challenge will be how to ensure the External Action Service and Commission have a coherent approach on human rights issues.

- **Read Barbara's assessment**

Fisheries and nature under Team Juncker



Green MEP Isabella Lövin assesses the proposed Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu Vella. There are clear concerns about the choice of merging environment and fisheries into one portfolio and making one commissioner responsible for areas that previously were the charge of individual commissioners. Furthermore, neither of the two "super-commissioners". Mr. Vella is to report to have been given the remit by Jean-Claude Juncker of defending the environment in cases of conflict between growth and environmental protection. A worrying situation.

- **Read Isabella's assessment**

Education, Culture, Youth and Citizenship &
Migration and Home Affairs



Greens/EFA MEP Judith Sargentini assesses the proposed Education, Culture, Youth and Citizenship Commissioner Tibor Navracsics and proposed Migration and Home Affairs Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos. To call the choice of nominees and their portfolios provocative would be an understatement. Mr. Navracsis played a role in a government that infringes basic democratic freedoms. Meanwhile, Mr. Avramopoulos, a prominent member of a government criticised for lack of action on migration, will have to come forward with concrete steps to address the tragedies surrounding 'boat migration'.

- Read Judith's assessment

Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union



Greens/EFA MEP Molly Scott Cato assesses the proposed Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union Commissioner Jonathan Hill. Already being referred to as a "poacher turned gamekeeper", Mr.Hill will have to answer serious questions about his independence, his commitment to the post and about how exactly his nomination came about.

- Read Molly's assessment

Climate Action and Energy



Greens/EFA MEP Claude Turmes assesses proposed Climate Action and Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete. Mr Cañete will have a lot to clarify during the hearings and there are fears that combining the Climate Action and Energy portfolios will only lead to a further downgrading of the EU's commitment to climate action. There are also some questions over Alenka BratuÅ¡ek, whom Mr Cañete would report to under the new Commission structure.

- Read Claude's assessment

Health and Food Safety



Greens/EFA MEP Bart Staes assesses proposed Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis. His medical background is a plus but there are concerns about the brief he has been given which views the portfolio from a too narrow commercial perspective.

- **Read Bart's assessment**

Digital agenda, copyright and privacy



Greens/EFA MEPs Julia Reda and Jan Philipp Albrecht assesses proposed commissioners Věra Jourová, Günther Oettinger and Andrus Ansip. Despite seeing the proposals as curious and eyebrow raising, they keep an open mind.

- Read Julia and Jan's assessment

Employment, Social affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility



Green MEP Jean Lambert assesses proposed commissioner Marianne Thyssen. The main question for the nominee must be how will she ensure the sustainable transformation of the economy and society?

- Read Jean's assessment

10.09.2014 - 18:00
Video - Reaction from Co-Presidents Rebecca Harms and Philippe Lamberts

10.09.2014 - 13:00
Statement from Co-Presidents Rebecca Harms and Philippe Lamberts

After months of rumours and intrigue, we now finally have the proposals from EU Commission president-elect Juncker on the new European Commission - #TeamJunckerEU. For our group, we have been keenly awaiting Jean Claude Juncker's proposals as this will give us a more clear indication of what kind of

direction he wants to take Europe. For us, it is very important to point out that this is just a proposal. The proposed commissioners must now be fully scrutinised and vetted by the European Parliament and MEPs must not be afraid to say no to problematic or inappropriate candidates. These proposals must not simply be waived through Parliament as part of another political deal between the big groups. First the proposed commissioners will face hearings in the relevant committees in the European Parliament and, after the hearings, MEPs must decide whether to say yes or no to the team as a whole. Our group will play a constructive role in the forthcoming hearings in the European Parliament and will only draw a definitive conclusion after these hearings. However, it is already possible to make an initial assessment. What is certainly welcome is that Juncker clearly wants a more political and empowered Commission, which is not afraid of standing up to national governments. This is what Europe badly needs. The decision to put political heavyweights in the so-called super-commissioner positions is positive on the face of it. However, in practise this will only be positive if Team Juncker pushes for a more democratic, just, open and sustainable EU. It is regrettable that in some cases national and party interests seem once again to have been more important than competence. A prime example is the decision to propose Lord Hill as financial services commissioner, this poacher-turned-gamekeeper approach is clearly not what is needed in this sensitive area. We also have doubts about the suitability of Tibor Navracsics as commissioner in charge of citizenship. We are also concerned about the proposal to merge the energy and climate change portfolios, which we fear is a downgrading of the EU's commitment to climate action at a crucial juncture. The fact there are only 9 female commissioners is a major source of disappointment and will mean that, despite championing gender equality across Europe, the EU Commission itself will make no progress from its past term. This is no reflection on President Juncker, who put a lot of effort into ensuring gender balance. Despite the fact that there is no shortage of excellent and highly-qualified women in EU member states, getting national governments to propose female candidates was like squeezing blood from a stone. If this College is to be approved, President Juncker must commit to ensuring he will use all means to raise the number of female commissioners during his term.

05.09.2014
Possible merger of climate and energy portfolios in new Commission rumoured

On Thursday, 4 September, a cross-political group of MEPs including Green members wrote to incoming Commission President Jean Claude Juncker to warn him about the decision to merge the energy and climate change portfolios. Read more:

- EU Commission - Greens criticise possible merger of the climate and energy portfolios

Recommended

Press release

Tim Hurst (CC BY-SA 2.0)



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Press release

European Council



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Letter

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Press release

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New Co-Presidents Terry Reintke and Nicolae Ștefănuță …

06.10.2026

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