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Greens/EFA Group congratulate new Vice President but demand zero tolerance strategy to stamp out corruption

Today, Members of the European Parliament have just voted to elect Marc Angel MEP (S&D) as Vice President of the Parliament, sitting on the Bureau. The vote was held in the wake of the suspension of the former Vice President Eva Kaili (S&D), who was caught up in allegations of corruption at the heart of the ‘Qatargate’ scandal. The Greens/EFA Group had selected Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield MEP to run for Vice President. Delbos-Corfield is a longtime corruption fighter, champion of ethics and integrity and European Parliament Rapporteur on the situation in Hungary.

Terry Reintke MEP, President of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament, comments:

“Amidst its biggest corruption scandal the majority of the Members of the European Parliament did not seize the momentum to vote for Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, the candidate with the highest expertise on ethics, transparency and fighting corruption. Power games and backdoor deals among the biggest groups seemed to be more important.”

“We congratulate Marc Angel on his election as Vice-President of the European Parliament, the Greens/EFA Group will continue to put pressure on this House to put in place a zero tolerance strategy with regard to fighting corruption.”

“We need stronger and better oversight of MEPs, as well as greater transparency of their assets, lobbyists, as well as sanctions for Members who do not comply with ethics rules.”

“Only the strongest and most effective tools will be enough to build trust in the EU institutions. The European citizens expect us to deliver on this. We won’t give in to a culture of hesitancy and grey areas which put the integrity and credibility of the European Parliament at risk.”

Philippe Lamberts MEP, President of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament, comments:

“We would like to congratulate Marc Angel on his new role. Our Group stands firm in our long held conviction to root out and stamp out any corruption in the EU institutions and we look forward to cooperating with the new Vice President on this work.”

“People need to trust that ethics and integrity are at the heart of the work of MEPs. That is why we cannot allow half measures or paper reforms when it comes to the fight against corruption. We will hold the new Vice President, the Bureau and all MEPs to account to ensure that we have the strongest possible measures in

this house.”

“All organisations and third country interest groups that lobby EU policy makers must be on the EU’s transparency register. We urgently need an independent ethics body with the power to investigate all EU institutions, agencies and bodies.”

More:

Greens/EFA Group policies to fight corruption in the EU institutions:

- Significantly enhancing whistleblower protection for staff members and APAs, by revising the Staff Regulations, in order to align them with the standards of the Whistleblower Directive;
- The establishment of an ethics body with the power to investigate all EU institutions, bodies and agencies, with the necessary financial means and staff to carry out its tasks fully;
- Reform of the transparency register to make it mandatory for all organisations and third countries representatives lobbying the EU institutions and introduce more stringent transparency rules, mapping foreign funding for EU-related lobbying, and ensuring an entry which allows for the identification of funding from foreign governments and entities acting on their behalf;
- A strong and independent oversight mechanism, established through a full reform of the Advisory Committee on the Code of Conduct of Members, to ensure the enforcement and monitoring of obligations, including with the participation of external experts, and coupled with the establishment of a complaint mechanism for anyone to report potential violations
- Sanctions for MEPs not complying with ethics, rules and regulations: clear and enhanced sanctions regime s needs to be in place and transparently enforced and not applied only by the President discretionally.
- Specific obligations for Members to declare their assets at the beginning and end of each mandate, to offer additional safeguards against corruption; side jobs, gifts and travels not paid for by the European Parliament must be duly declared by MEPs, publicly accessible and monitored in order to avoid conflict of interest;
- Introduce a cooling off period for former MEPs to ensure that they cannot use their position to influence policy;
- Establish a special committee with a strong mandate on transparency and anti-corruption, to ensure the revision of the European Parliament's ethics rules under public scrutiny.

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