Press release | 14.01.2015

Tax evasion/Luxembourg leaks

EU Parliament inquiry committee gains cross-political support and must be swiftly put in place

A proposal from the Greens/EFA group for a full European Parliament inquiry committee into tax evasion and dumping following the Luxembourg Leaks revelations today received the required support of 25% of the European Parliament (1). The Greens/EFA group welcomed the cross-political support from all parliamentary groups and called on the Parliament and its president to move to set up the committee without delay. Announcing the development, Greens/EFA co-president **Philippe Lamberts** said:

"We welcome the cross-political support for an inquiry committee into tax avoidance and dumping in Europe. This broad support confirms that such a committee is indeed the most appropriate and significant tool available to the European Parliament to investigate the Luxembourg Leaks revelations and ensure a comprehensive response at EU level. The European Parliament and its president must now move swiftly and take the relevant steps to ensure the committee is set up, so no more time is lost."

Greens/EFA economic and finance spokesperson **Sven Giegold** added:

"Ensuring a comprehensive EU response to this scandal is crucial for the credibility of the European institutions and the breadth of political support for the inquiry committee demonstrates this. The fact that it is the pro-European forces in the Parliament that have supported the inquiry committee, and not the far right or UKIP, underlines that this is not an exercise in Europe- or Juncker-bashing but an attempt to ensure a credible EU response.

"With EU governments refusing to take serious steps to tackle the problem of tax evasion in Europe, it is all the more important that the European Parliament fills this vacuum. An inquiry committee is the most powerful tool available to the EP and can investigate breaches of EU law by member states and if the Commission acted in accordance with its duties under the EU treaties. It will ensure MEPs have sufficient resources for such an investigation, as well as access to the necessary documents. As such, it is far more effective than merely drafting initiative reports, as had originally been proposed.

"We are also continuing to work to improve EU taxation legislation and last week tabled an amendment on the introduction of tax transparency obligations for big corporations. We call on the other political groups, EU governments in Council and the Commission to support this important measure."

(1) The European Parliament can set up committees of inquiry to investigate cases of breaches or poor

application of EU law. To be created, the proposed committee must have the support of 25% of MEPs (188 MEPs), with the terms of reference to be confirmed by the conference of presidents of the political groups, before the European Parliament plenary votes to approve the committee: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/00aab6aedf/Committees.html

The full draft mandate for the proposed committee can be found at: /legacy/fileadmin/dam/Documents/2014-11-18_luxleaks_inquiry_committee_mandate.pdf

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