

Il Presidente

Ms Monika HOHLMEIER, MEP  
Chair of the Committee on Budgetary Control  
SPINELLI 14E201  
BRUSSELS

D 305028 21.04.2020

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your letters of 4 March and of 20 March 2020 with regard to the CONT committee's fact-finding mission to the Czech Republic from 26 to 28 February 2020 aimed at protecting the good use of EU taxpayers' money in connection with structural funds and agricultural policy.

Short after the said mission, I was made aware of the use by the Czech prime minister of inappropriate language vis-a-vis several members of the CONT committee. It is equally worrisome what your letter of 4 March brought to my attention, i.e. the reception by the Czech members of the CONT delegation and their families of death threats as well as the aggressive language addressed to you by means of letters or comments on the internet.

Following your letter of 4 March, the issue has been raised during the Conference of Presidents of 5 March 2020. On that occasion, there has been general agreement that verbal abuse through intimidating language at the highest political level can never be accepted and I received a mandate to raise the matter with the President of the European Commission and the President of the European Council.

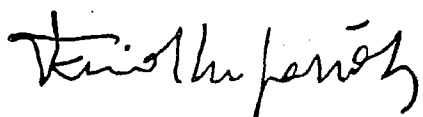
As to the letters of 3 March 2020 from the two Czech associations, namely The Czech Agrarian Chamber and The Czech Agricultural Chamber, it is indeed unacceptable that their views and arguments concerning the agricultural policy in the Czech Republic were not expressed in an appropriate tone and language.

On this basis, it appears necessary to reaffirm the full independence and the function of the European Parliament in exercising control over governmental action that is financed by EU funds. Moreover, I believe that the attempts of intimidation, including death threats reported on in your letter of 20 March 2020, should be promptly addressed and brought to the attention of the relevant law enforcement authorities, by the Members concerned.

Besides this necessary action, I would like to assure you that you and all MEPs have the full backing of the European Parliament for actions taken and opinion rendered in the exercise of the legitimate mandate. And I wish to reiterate the importance of the role of the CONT committee and the need for CONT to engage in all necessary efforts with regard to the scrutiny of EU budget implementation.

Finally, I also agree that we shall do the utmost to support small and medium-sized farmers and companies, which are the backbone of the European economy, including by addressing firmly any questioning of such support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Maria SASSOLI". The signature is written in a cursive style with some capital letters.

David Maria SASSOLI