



**PARLIAMENT OF ROMANIA
CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Bucharest, 20 May 2011
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Ms. Anne-Marie MELDGAARD
Chairperson of the European Affairs Committee

The Folketing of Denmark

Dear Ms. Meldgaard,

We were surprised to learn in late April, of a letter sent to Denmark's prime-minister, by four members of the European Parliament, elected in Denmark, asking to indefinitely delay Romania's and Bulgaria's accession to the Schengen area, based on concerns regarding unacceptable levels of corruption and criminality.

One would expect MEP's to have their say in the European Parliament which is presently dealing¹ with the Schengen accession matter, and support a European Parliament's resolution, as members of the organization, even if opposed to their own views.

Besides the "*status & role imbalance*" of the mentioned démarche, a flaw may have appeared in the analysis of "*gains vs. loses*" of the European Union and those member states opposing the Schengen accession.

In short, rejection may well result in losing focus and diminishing performance in guarding the EU borders, once the two countries saw their quest indefinitely rejected, and this, after a tremendous effort to meet the conditions set in the beginnings of the process.

¹ On May 2, the Civil Liberties Committee voted 33 in favour and 3 against Bulgaria and Romania's bid to join the Schengen area, stating that the two countries have met the necessary conditions, based on the evaluation reports on their preparations.

We believe that the recent developments in North-Africa, having massive illegal migration as an effect, are in no way making new accessions inappropriate. On the contrary, they are currently boosting the need for a high-quality border-guarding.

On the other hand, as it was already proven during the EU accession preparations, Romania and Bulgaria answer quite well to peer pressure, succeeding to eventually meet the conditions, irrespective of complexity or hardship. Not to mention that both countries acted in good faith, as responsible members and supportive of EU initiatives, after their accession.

We are aware, of course, of persistent corruption issues, but in the time passed from your visit to Romania, last June, many concrete anti-corruption measures have been taken and unprecedented results start surfacing.

Regarding criminality, though, is hard to grasp the logic behind the argument that *"European citizens had increasingly become victims of theft and robbery, most often committed by Romanian criminals"*.

Deploring Romanian offenders' illegal activities in West-European countries, evoked by the letter's authors, we remind that Romania has no authority to act in foreign territory. Relevant Romanian authorities full heartedly engaged in joint operations with the local police, based on mutual agreements. Such cooperation projects have already been successfully implemented and more are underway.

We believe that the unanimous decision of the Council to agree to Romania's and Bulgaria's membership to Schengen area, should be based exclusively on the results of the Schengen evaluation² and according to the countries' progress in implementing the Schengen acquis.

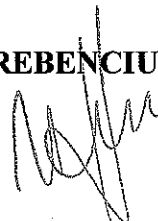
Connecting issues in the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism or other issues to Schengen requirements is discriminatory towards Romania and Bulgaria. No other Schengen member state was ever assessed according to extra-technical criteria, while some of the newest members were accepted despite a few pending problems.

In this regard we are kindly asking for your support and the Committee's you chair, to keep the Schengen accession issue in the standard framework, in compliance to the already existing rules.

We rely on yourself's and the committee members' professional expertise and fair political assessment to clarify and promote an equitable stance over the Schengen accession matter, in the Danish Parliament and Government, as well.

Please accept Madam Chairperson, the assurance of our highest consideration.

Viorel HREBENCIUC
Chairman



² On January 28, 2011, the Schengen Evaluation Group in the EU Council, has adopted the Schengen Evaluation Report, thus positively concluding Romania's evaluation process.