

2016/025

Paris, February 17, 2016

Dear Fellow Chairs,

On, Wednesday May 18, 2016, the European Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly will hold an inter-parliamentary meeting bringing together representatives of the national parliaments and of the European Parliament on the issue of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and on the question of the posting of workers.

The idea is that by dealing with these subjects, the consideration of social rights can be encouraged in the context of the activities of European companies and their responsibility in this field both within the Union and in other countries can be highlighted.

The French National Assembly has expressed its voice on each of these topics by means of resolutions. It has pleaded in favour of a concrete implementation of the social dimension of the European project which would be coherent with the political priorities announced, in particular by the President, Jean-Claude Juncker.

Indeed, the national approaches to CSR, as well as those based solely on the good will of companies, as useful as they may be, do not fulfill the requirements of the globalization of supply chains from the human rights point of view as well as from a social and economic development point of view in addition to the protection of the environment. In its resolution of June 25, 2015, adopted upon the initiative of the European Affairs Committee, the French National Assembly thus considered it necessary for CSR to be strengthened in European law, by including obligations in the field of companies corporate vigilance concerning their business relations, their subsidiaries, their sub-contractors and their suppliers, as is proposed by the main directors of the OECD and of the United Nations. Nonetheless, the content of these obligations must be detailed, as well as their field of application and indeed the sanctions which would be imposed if they were not respected. This inter-parliamentary meeting will be the opportunity to bring together our ideas and to bring our points of view closer in the perspective of the “green card” project which I presented on this subject.

To the chairs of the relevant national parliamentary standing committees

The European Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly has been strongly involved in the fight against fraud concerning workers posted abroad and was, in addition, at the origin of several pieces of work on this subject (fact-finding missions, debates in plenary sitting, members' bills) which sought not only to have an impact on changing the 1996 directive on workers posted abroad but also to have included in national positive law, provisions aiming at a better monitoring of such fraud. It appears today, whilst the Commission once more envisages revising the directive on the posting of workers, that we must remain vigilant to ensure that such a revision does not lead to a backward step both from the point of view of legal or illegal wage competition between states (let us remember that President Juncker has directly called for the implementation of the principle "for equal work, equal pay") and in the field of the workers themselves to whom we owe the idea of dignified working conditions. The parliamentary meeting will thus be an opportunity to have the discussion progress on this major issue in the development of the social dimension of the Union and in the future of European construction.

It is my pleasure to invite you to this meeting which will take place between 9.30am and 5pm on May 18, 2016. The invitations cover two legislators per Chamber, representing the various committees concerned as well as two civil servants.

The morning (9.30am-12.30pm) shall be given over to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and after a buffet lunch, the afternoon shall deal with the subject of worker posting. The meeting shall take place at the French National Assembly (Salle Lamartine, 101 rue de l'Université, 75007 Paris).

The sessions shall take place in French and in English (there shall be simultaneous translation facilities available for four other languages according to the requests which are made – the payment of the interpreters shall be ensured by the parliament which makes the request).

I would ask you in advance to confirm your participation, or that of your representative, before April 5, 2016, to the secretariat of the European Affairs Committee, by mail to the following address: secretariat-commission-ue@assemblee-nationale.fr

Yours sincerely, dear colleague,

Danielle AUROI