

NON OFFICIAL TRANSLATION



Draft translation of letter sent the
28/06/2004

With reference REGIO A1/TS/nm D
(2004) 4358

Madam President,

Mr. President,

President Romano Prodi and Commissioner Jacques Barrot asked me to thank you for your letter of 28 April last by which you transmit the reaction of your organizations concerning the Communication from the Commission on the "Dialogue with associations of regional and local authorities on the formulation of European Union policy". Once again I am pleased with the interest and with the support of your organizations to the efforts of the Commission on this field.

As we indicated in our recent letters [on the 13/04/2004 reference REGIO A1/TS/nm D(2004)1390 and on the 10/05/2004 reference REGIO A1/TS/nm D (2004) 2337] the Commission, by proposing in its Communication the introduction of a political dialogue with the associations of territorial authorities, puts

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ahead its will to further associate the territorial actors by providing them the opportunity to express their views on the European policies that they contribute to implement, prior to the launch of the formal decision making process.

As you know, the President of the Commission invited the Presidents of the European and national associations of local and regional authorities to take part in a kick-off meeting of this dialogue on 10 May last. During that first meeting, to which Commissioners Messrs Jacques Barrot and Peter Balázs and the President of the Committee of the Regions Mr. Peter Straub took part, the Commission representatives had the opportunity to recall their firm intention to engage a privileged dialogue with the representatives of the regional and local authorities' associations on the planned guidelines of EU actions by encouraging a bidirectional political exchange of views.

At this meeting, the Commission representatives in addition pointed out the role awaited on the part of the Committee of the Regions within the framework of this dialogue as the will of the Commission to work in close cooperation with the Committee for the organization of each future meeting.

In addition, as underlined by Commissioner Barrot, the agenda of each meeting although based on the presentation of the annual work programme and on the major initiatives likely to have a marked regional and local impact, will offer the opportunity to the associations to inform the Commission about the expectations of their members concerning the development of the policies of the European Union. At the same time, the Commission exposed its fears that this exercise does not become too technical and too bureaucratic if a monitoring and evaluation mechanism were associated.

I am confident on the future support of your organizations and on your active participation at the future dialogue meetings that the new team of the Commission will be organized by the new Commission.

Yours faithfully,

Original letter (in French) Signed by
Mr Graham Meadows Director
General of Regional Policy