

Minister Edward Scicluna
Ministry of Finance of the Maltese Republic
30 Maison demandols
South Street
Valletta VLT 1102
Malta

Subject: Invitation for an exchange of views with the PANA and ECON Committee on Thursday 26 January 2017, my previous letter of 21 December 2016

Brussels, 24.01.2017

Dear Minister Scicluna,

I refer to my previous letter of 21 December 2016, and our previous exchanges, on our invitation to yourself and the future Estonian Presidency for an exchange of views with the PANA and ECON committees on money-laundering, tax evasion and tax avoidance, which fall in the mandate of the PANA Inquiry Committee.

I was under the impression from our previous exchanges that you were indicating your willingness and readiness to accept our invitation, and to engage in a dialogue with our committees on this important matter.

However today (evening of 24 January) we received a response from the Presidencies that they will not participate in the ECON/PANA meeting on 26 January.

I have to say I am disappointed about both the decision itself, as well as the fact that the decision has been communicated to the PANA and ECON Committees so late. I consider this disrespectful also in view of the key constitutional Treaty principle of loyal cooperation between our institutions. We are co-legislator together and need to stand up against practices of money laundering, tax evasion and tax avoidance together. Furthermore, I consider this a disrespect of our work as Inquiry Committee on such an important topic for Europe's citizens, and of the European Parliament itself, as the only directly elected European institution representing European citizens.

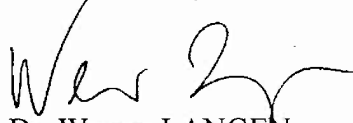
I very much doubt the Council and Member States wish to be seen as obstructing a European parliamentary inquiry on practices of money-laundering, tax evasion and tax avoidance, but rather on the contrary as being at the forefront of combating such practices.

I also question that in times of increasing Euroscepticism across Europe, it is time for inter-institutional rivalries between our two institutions; I would on the contrary believe it is high time for both our institutions to work jointly and constructively on tackling the problems and concerns of our citizens.

In this spirit, I call upon you and your colleagues in the Council to reconsider your approach, and to work constructively with the PANA inquiry committee in the future.

I remain at your disposal for further discussions on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Werner LANGEN

*Chair of the Committee of Inquiry into Money Laundering,
Tax Avoidance and Tax Evasion*

cc: Mr Jeppe TRANHOLM-MIKKELSEN, Secretary-General of the European Council
Ambassador Bonicci, Chair of COREPER II, Council of the European Union
Antonio Tajani, President of the European Parliament