



ROME 2013-01-27

Ms Reneta Nikolova, President of the Bulgarian Club of Journalists against corruption.

Dear Vice-President of the EC Tajani,

Dear President of the Senate Grasso,

Dear General Capolupo

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Dear colleagues from the media,

First of all I would like to thank the organizers for their invitation and the opportunity to share at this prestigious forum some of the experience of the organization I represent, the Bulgarian Club – Journalist against Corruption.

Throughout our nearly 10-year history we have adopted a number of successful models of partnership with institutions and organizations, always guided by the belief that transparency and better information are the most powerful weapons against corruption.

Of course, during this period we were able to learn from the best European communication models among which I would highlight the communicators' network of the European Commission European Anti-Fraud Office OLAF, as well as the founder of the network and its present honorary chairman who is working now for DG ENTERPRISE and Vice President Tajani.

During this period we have worked together with the Guardia di Finanza and ZKA and here I have to emphasize their role. We implemented jointly a project with the support of the European Commission Hercule programme against cigarettes counterfeiting. It was highly appreciated at European level.

For a small post-communist country such as Bulgaria, with a number of problems related to corruption and often linked to counterfeiting, but with an emerging active civil society support from Europe is crucial. It gives journalists the courage to continue their efforts to combat corruption, fraud and counterfeiting.

In this context, the visit of Vice President of the European Commission Mr. Antonio Tajani to Bulgaria in September 2013, during which he participated in an international conference and met with journalists from the club, was very important for us.

His visit marked the beginning of a campaign in Bulgaria against counterfeiting, a crime that takes money out of the pocket of every European citizen. In a very busy schedule, Mr. Tajani managed not only to meet with members of the club but also to hold a series of meetings at the highest level – with the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Ministers of Economy and of EU funds, Economy Minister, the Vice President of the Republic of Bulgaria, and the Mayor Sofia, with a great media coverage across the country. Everybody he spoke to made a personal commitment to join the fight against counterfeiting

By persuasion Mr. Tajani managed to attract support for the European campaign at all levels of government in the country, in the media, and among representatives of one of the largest business organizations – the Bulgarian Construction Chamber, and of citizens.

This visit and these meetings were crucial; they were a very clear signal that the fight against counterfeiting is a problem not only for institutions. This is a problem for every taxpayer, for every European citizen and here

organizations such as ours can play an important role – to inform people about the damage that this activity causes, to educate the public and build intolerance to such activity. The personal involvement of Vice President Tajani with this cause is impressive.

That is why for his efforts as Vice President of the Commission and a former journalist in the fight against corruption and fraud and especially for launching the first campaign at European level against counterfeiting VP Tajani was awarded a diploma as honorary member of Club – Journalists against Corruption.

I think that the experience of Club – Journalists against Corruption with the support of VP Tajani is a good example of cooperation and communication between the non-government sector and the Commission to work for the EU priorities. In a time when populism is on the march – concrete activities in the interest of the European ideal are things that bring us together. I want once again to thank Mr. Tajani, his spokesperson and the Communication unit of DG Enterprise. I am here together with my colleagues from the Club’s board to demonstrate our conviction and support in the campaign against counterfeiting.

By this action in my own home country Vice-President Tajani and the European Commission set out to protect the citizens of all the European Union and, of course, to protect businesses across Europe, particularly the most visible brands from countries such as France, Germany and, of course, Italy. I hope you agree that is an objective worth pursuing.

Thank you for your attention.