



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 18.10.2016  
C(2016) 6617 final*

*Dear Chair,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement (revision of the suspension mechanism) {COM(2016) 290 final}.*

*The Commission welcomes the Assembleia da República's support for the proposal and the recognition that it complies with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. Indeed the objectives of the proposal, namely to strengthen the existing suspension mechanism for visa exemptions, cannot be achieved by Member States acting unilaterally, as the mechanism is part of the EU's common visa policy and as such of the Schengen acquis. Action at EU level is therefore necessary to extend the possible suspension grounds, shorten procedures and facilitate the activation of the mechanism.*

*The Commission hopes that, following the general approach adopted by the Council on 20 May 2016 and the positive vote by the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs on a draft report on 7 July 2016, an agreement on the proposal between the co-legislators can be found in the near future.*

*The Commission looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Frans Timmermans  
First Vice-President*

*Dimitris Avramopoulos  
Member of the Commission*

*Ms Regina BASTOS  
Chair of the European Affairs Committee  
of the Assembleia da República  
Palácio de S. Bento  
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*cc. Mr Eduardo FERRO RODRIGUES  
President of the  
Assembleia da República  
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