

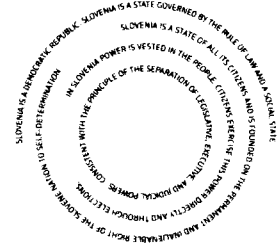


REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Committee on EU Affairs

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Courtesy translation

Mr Michel Barnier
European Commissioner for Internal Market and Services
European Commission
Brussels B-1049

Dear Commissioner,

The Committee on EU Affairs discussed and supported the draft position of the Republic of Slovenia regarding the Proposal for a Directive at its 9th meeting of 9 March 2012. However, due to growing public concern about the possible privatisation of water resources and water supply in the framework of awarding concession contracts for EU services, a joint meeting of three committees was called: the Committee on EU Affairs, the Committee on Finance and Monetary Policy and the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Food and the Environment of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia.

At a joint meeting of 22 February 2013, the above committees discussed the Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the award of concession contracts COM (2011) 897. After a comprehensive debate they adopted important substantive points and decisions which we are submitting in the framework of the political dialogue.

In addition to deputies of the said committees, also Slovenian MEPs, representatives of the Government, Representations of the European Commission in Slovenia, local communities' associations, non-governmental organisations and experts in the field of water management participated in the debate. The Republic of Slovenia therefore has the following comments as regards the above Proposal for a Directive:

- Water is a public good, so access to water and drinking water supply is considered a fundamental human right and a matter of public interest. Therefore, management of water resources should remain in the sole responsibility of the Member States, or in the Republic of Slovenia the independence of the local communities in the provision and organisation of services of general economic interest should be preserved.
- In the debate it was highlighted that there is a potential risk that large private companies (multinational companies) would acquire through public procurement the right to water management and supply on the Slovenian market which would result in the change of the perception of water as a tradable good. Water would therefore be managed according to market principles which would lead to deterioration of water quality, the omission of

investments in water infrastructure and the increase in water charges. The past practice and different comparisons in other Member States have shown that if the management was taken over by private companies, this would result in uneconomic management of water networks and of the basic network, in the increase in prices and the impairment of water quality.

After the conclusion of the debate, the members of the above committees adopted the following decisions:

1. The committees call upon the Government to preserve, in the field of public goods, the universal access to water supply as a fundamental human right.
2. The committees propose that the Government together with the interested public prepare a legislation that would prevent any possible future privatisation of drinking water management and which would ensure equal access to drinking water to all citizens.

The Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Food and the Environment adopted a further decision in which it welcomes the European Citizens' Initiative "Water and sanitation are a human right! Water is a public good, not a commodity!".

Yours sincerely,

Roman Jakič
Chair of the Committee on EU
Affairs

Cc:

- Dr. Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment
- European Commission Representation in the Republic of Slovenia
- Council of the President of the National Assembly
- Government
- Members of the Committee on EU Affairs