



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 05/02/2010  
C/2010/762

Mr Anders Forsberg  
Secretary-General of the Riksdag  
Sveriges Riksdag  
SE – 100 12 STOCKHOLM

Dear Mr Forsberg,

The Commission would like to thank the Riksdag for setting out its positions declared in the statement on the Commission's Communication on "An area of freedom, security and justice serving the citizen" {COM(2009)262} (the Stockholm Programme). The Commission welcomes the statement and shares many of the Committee's concerns and views.

The Committee expresses a positive general position towards the action of the Union against discrimination and racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and homophobia, whilst emphasising the importance of upholding freedom of expression when taking measures in this area. The Commission reiterates its commitment to ensure compliance with fundamental rights of all EU legislation and recalls that it has already established a specific methodology in that respect<sup>1</sup>. As regards more specifically the respect for diversity, the Commission identified as a priority issue the need to make full use of the existing financial instruments and to strengthen the enforcement of the existing legislation. The Commission also shares the Committee's opinion that measures aiming to protect the security of citizens must be fully compatible with fundamental rights.

The Committee points out that, in many fields mentioned in the Communication, the laws and practices of Sweden are well advanced and could and should serve as examples for developing these policies or concrete legal instruments in the future. The Commission welcomes such suggestions which help in the drafting of the future legal instruments and the implementation of EU policies.

The Committee emphasises that increasing flows of information between Member State authorities' call for high levels of protection of individual privacy. The Commission agrees fully with the Committee that existing and new IT systems and databases must operate so as to maintain the fundamental principles of the rule of law and non-discrimination.

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<sup>1</sup> Report on the practical operation of the methodology for a systematic and rigorous monitoring of compliance with the Charter of fundamental rights COM(2009) 205 final

The views of the Committee along with the concerns expressed in the three explanatory reservations have been taken into consideration as part of the discussions on the Stockholm programme, which was adopted on 10 December 2009. The reflections will also be taken into account in the preparations on the action plan which we expect to be adopted under the Spanish Presidency in 2010. The Commission took also into consideration the evaluable input from the discussions in the Joint Parliamentary Meeting which took place in the European Parliament in Brussels on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

I look forward to developing our policy dialogue further in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Margot WALLSTRÖM  
Vice-President of the European Commission