



Joint Letter by Members of the European Parliament to Members of the European Commission on the urgent need to address the challenges of market surveillance in Europe

President Jean-Claude Juncker
First Vice-President for Better Regulation, Frans Timmermans
Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, Jyrki Katainen
Commissioner for the Internal Market and Services, Elżbieta Bieńkowska
Commissioner for Justice and Consumers, Věra Jourová

Brussels, 18 November 2016

Dear President Juncker,
Dear Commissioners,

The EU must urgently address the challenges of market surveillance in Europe.

As concerned Members of the European Parliament and European consumers, we wish to express our dismay at the failure of market surveillance in Europe, and Member States' inability to properly enforce safety legislation designed to protect their citizens, not to mention the environment and intellectual property rights.

This legislation underpins the fundamental principles of the European Union and has been approved by the European Parliament. It should be implemented in the Member States and enforced by effective national authorities via robust controls at the EU points of entry.

However, there is clear evidence that a number of regulations are widely ignored in a number of Member States, including those which are major points of entry for importing consumer goods.

Many different sectors are equally affected by the lack of market surveillance, with similarly detrimental effects on both consumer safety and unfair competition. When only responsible European groups apply the rules, the European industry as a whole faces unfair competition, which is destroying more jobs in the EU every year. This is why we believe that a consistent and structural answer to this problem needs to be provided as soon as possible.

As MEPs, we are committed to assisting the Commission, Member States and their national surveillance authorities in endorsing their role as guardians and enforcers of the regulations on the circulation of goods in the European market and of imported goods from third countries.

We certainly welcome the European Commission's intention to launch a comprehensive set of actions to further enhance efforts to keep non-compliant products out of the EU market. We also support the consultation with industry, national authorities and interested parties to understand how the EU could better support surveillance authorities in Member States, and the preparation of an impact assessment to set out the most appropriate policy options in pursuing this goal. But we must confess that these initiatives look like many others seen during the previous ten years, and all seem to be ways of postponing taking action.

This is why we are now calling for an immediate action, supported by a strong European-level ambition to guarantee the functioning of one of the greatest achievements of the European project: the Single Market.

Consultations and impact assessments are useful in a preparatory phase but they are not the solution at this critical stage. We call for a strong signal to be sent to business operators, letting them know that while the single market is open, all actors who are benefitting from the value of a market of 450 million consumers have to respect the rules that Europe has given to itself.

One of our recommendations is to use existing investigative and control tools, such as are already in place in the areas of food safety, trade, anti-fraud, or competition, and apply them to market surveillance, and also promote the exchange of officials between different sectors. Fundamentally, we believe that it will prove most efficient to allocate resources to effective border surveillance at the main EU ports of entry, and to provide support to national authorities by sending Commission officials on an ad hoc basis. One additional element that could make a crucial difference would be transforming surveillance from a costly to a profitable activity, with unethical economic operators incurring costs. We propose that all, or some of these actions, are implemented immediately in a trial phase targeting the most dangerous categories of products.

In this framework, we would like to request that the European Commission presents how it intends to proceed on this matter during a public discussion at the European Parliament, avoiding the usual listing of initiatives that are under examination, and instead being prepared to openly share with operators and Members of the Parliament strong surveillance actions to be implemented in the short term as radical solutions to the problem.

Dear President, you stated when you first took office that you “want to be serious about being big on big things and small on small things”. The surveillance of ports of entry and the functioning of the single market are areas in which the time has come for Europe to be big.

We look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

MEP Sirpa Pietikäinen (EPP, Finland)



MEP Pascal Arimont (EPP, Belgium)



MEP Biljana Borzan (S&D, Croatia)



MEP Cristian-Silviu Buşoi (EPP, Romania)



MEP Alain Cadec (EPP, France)



MEP Wim Van de Camp (EPP, The Netherlands)



MEP Paolo de Castro (S&D, Italy)

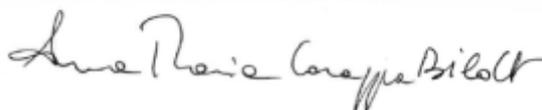


MEP Birgit Collin-Langen (EPP, Germany)

MEP Lara Comi (EPP, Italy)



MEP Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (EPP, Sweden)



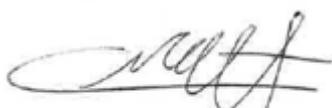
MEP Nicola Danti (S&D, Italy)



MEP Elisabetta Gardini (EPP, Italy)



MEP Françoise Grossetête (EPP, France)

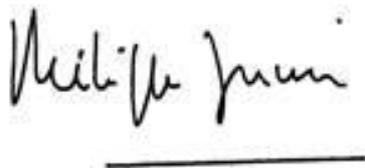


F. Grossetête

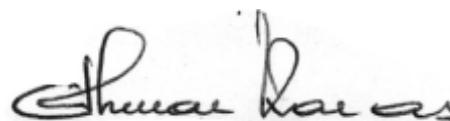
MEP Antanas Guoga (EPP, Lithuania)



MEP Philippe Juvin (EPP, France)



MEP Othmar Karas (EPP, Austria)



MEP Marlene Mizzi (S&D, Malta)



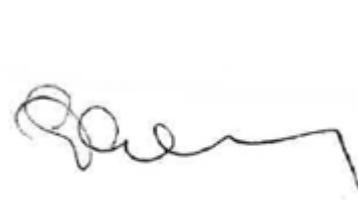
MEP Lambert Van Nistelrooij (EPP, The Netherlands)



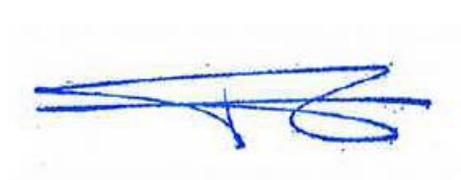
MEP Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D, Italy)



MEP Pina Picierno (S&D, Italy)



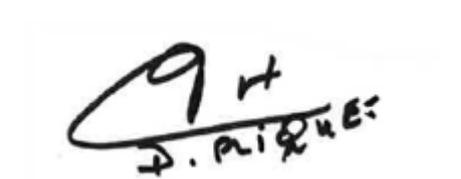
MEP Franck Proust (EPP, France)



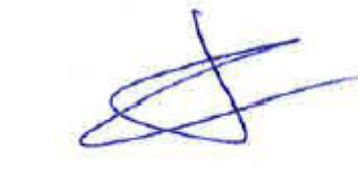
MEP Frédérique Ries (ALDE, Belgium)



MEP Dominique Riquet (ALDE, France)



MEP Virgine Rozière (S&D, France)



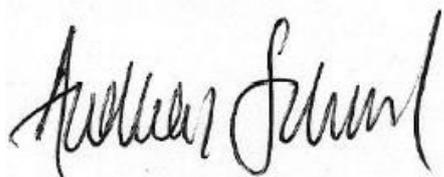
MEP Tokia Saïfi (EPP, France)



MEP Marielle de Sarnez (ALDE, France)



MEP Andreas Schwab (EPP, Germany)



MEP Bart Staes (Greens, Belgium)



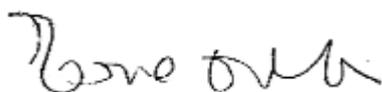
MEP Ivan Štefanec (EPP, Slovakia)



MEP Marc Tarabella (S&D, Belgium)



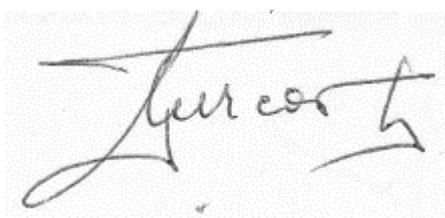
MEP Patrizia Toia (S&D, Italy)



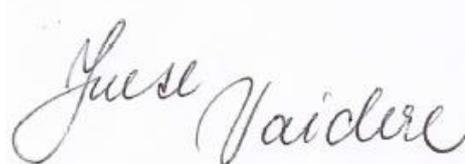
MEP Ramon Tremosa (ALDE, Spain)



MEP Mihai Țurcanu (EPP, Romania)



MEP Inese Vaidere (EPP, Latvia)



MEP Sabine Verheyen (EPP, Germany)



MEP Iuliu Winkler (EPP, Romania)

