

BUSINESSEUROPE



THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Mr John Monks
General Secretary
ETUC
Boulevard du Roi Albert II, 5
B – 1210 Bruxelles

Brussels, 14 January 2011

Dear General Secretary,

I read a copy of the letter you addressed to Commissioner Rehn with attention, and disagree with both its substance and its tone.

In a process aimed at restoring confidence and taming acute market instability, external financial assistance has been called upon by Greece and Ireland, subject to a negotiated conditionality programme. The EU / IMF funding agreement with these two countries and related memorandum of understanding provide much needed certainty around public finances and the path to recovery.

These are exceptional circumstances implying exceptional decisions and particular responsibilities for national, European and international institutions. Prior to finalisation of the policy recommendations, according to the information gathered from our members, the national social partners were consulted. The subsequent monitoring of their implementation is within the mandate of the European Commission. It goes without saying that EU Treaty provisions and the competence of national social partners must be fully respected in that regard.

Social dialogue and constructive industrial relations are critical at present and must be based on a sense of collective responsibility, including vis-à-vis current European initiatives. It is difficult to see how an aggressive and unjustified attack on this process – combined with inappropriate historical references - will help to find answers to the very difficult problems that the governments, social partners and people of the country concerned are facing today.



The focus of attention must entirely be on finding effective ways of restoring stability, competitiveness and rising employment in the years ahead. Acknowledging the challenges and accompanying the necessary reforms will better serve the interest of citizens and workers than sterile anti-European rhetoric.

I am copying this message to the addressees of your letter.

Yours sincerely,

Philippe de Buck

cc: Mr José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission
Mr László Andor, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Mr Olli Rehn, Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs
Mr Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council
Mr Dominique Strauss-Kahn, International Monetary Fund Managing Director
Mr Jean-Claude Trichet, President of the European Central Bank
Mr Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary – the EU Presidency