



Mrs Viviane Reding
Vice-President of the
European Commission
200 rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels

December 2010

Dear Vice-President,

We are writing to you in relation to the European contract law project. We welcome the recent establishment of the Sounding Board which provides a useful forum in which to discuss this complex issue. However, we would like to stress the importance of an effective consultation process allowing for a more informed debate and to express our shared concerns about the too rapid pace at which this dossier is evolving.

The platform has started at a rhythm, which, in our opinion, is too fast. This is a complex matter that deserves thorough examination and should not be hurried. Accordingly, it is difficult for stakeholders to provide systematic input and views on the impact of the proposals, not least given that the proposals themselves remain at this stage unclear. We would also like to underline that the absence of a response from stakeholders should not be interpreted as tacit agreement with the operational conclusions.

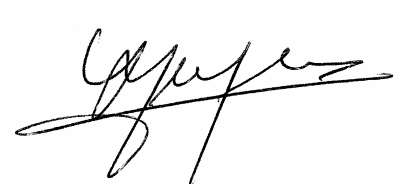
As you are aware, one of the difficulties of the current discussion is the lack of a clear picture of the format, scope and legal basis of the contract law instrument currently being worked on by the Expert Group.

Moreover, the debate on the directive on consumer rights, which is closely linked to the European contract law project, is at a crucial stage. Both seek to address legal fragmentation in business-to-consumer transactions in the single market. They should progress in tandem rather than in parallel, taking account of the delay in reaching an agreement on the directive.

We would therefore urge you to wait for the outcome of the pending consultation on European contract law and for the finalisation of the first reading of the consumer rights directive before progressing further with drafting a European Contract Law initiative. We also stress the need for a proper consultation about the text of any such initiative, allowing the necessary stakeholder involvement and dialogue on the direction chosen by the Commission.

We look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely,



Monique Goyens
Director General
BEUC



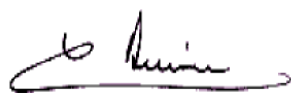
Philippe de Buck
Director General
BUSINESSEUROPE



Roberto Barone
President
CNUE



Arnaldo Abruzzini
Secretary General
EUROCHAMBRES



Xavier Durieu
Secretary General
EuroCommerce



Andrea Benassi
Secretary General
UEAPME