

## **Letter to Ms Federica Mogherini High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission**

Correspondence - 21/09/2017

**Case 454/2014/PMC - Opened on 18/03/2014 - Recommendation on 15/02/2017 -**

**Decision on 21/09/2017 - Institution concerned** European External Action Service ( Recommendation agreed by the institution ) |

Ms Federica MOGHERINI

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission

Strasbourg, 21/09/2017

### **Decision of the European Ombudsman in inquiry 454/2014/PMC concerning the European External Action Service's practice of offering unpaid traineeships in EU delegations**

Dear Ms Mogherini,

In the context of the above-mentioned inquiry, which followed a complaint to my Office, I had to assess whether it is appropriate for the European External Action Service (EEAS) not to pay its trainees in EU Delegations in third countries.

At the conclusion of the inquiry, I found that the EEAS's practice of not paying trainees in its Delegations amounts to maladministration. I thus recommended to the EEAS that it pay all of its trainees, including those in EU Delegations, an appropriate allowance. I referred in this respect to the positive example of the European Parliament which has abolished unpaid traineeships in its Secretariat.

In reply to my recommendation, you informed me that you have requested funds from the budgetary authorities in order to provide for paying EEAS trainees in EU Delegations.

I welcome your commitment to pay trainees in EU Delegations, subject to being granted the



appropriate budgetary resources by the budgetary authorities.

Accordingly, I am happy to regard your reply as an acceptance of my recommendation. I will of course follow future developments in this area with great interest and am open to renewing my inquiries in the future if this seems warranted and useful.

Given that the successful implementation of the traineeship scheme suggested by the EEAS depends on the request for funds being granted, I have requested the budgetary authorities to examine this issue carefully when agreeing the budget of the European Union. I have written also to the European Commissioner responsible for the Budget in this respect.

I take this opportunity to thank your staff for the good cooperation shown vis-à-vis my inquiry team during the discussions in the course of the inquiry.

Please find enclosed a copy of my decision in this inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

Emily O'Reilly

European Ombudsman