



P. NIKIFOROS DIAMANDOUROS

Prof. Dr. Hans-Gert Pöttering
President
European Parliament
Rue Wiertz
B - 1047 Brussels
BELGIQUE

Strasbourg, 17 JAN. 2008

Mr President,

The European Ombudsman's Annual Report for 2006 contained a paragraph about complaints alleging maladministration by the European Investment Bank in its external lending activities. More specifically, it stated that, subject to possible future resource constraints, the Ombudsman envisages using the own-initiative power whenever the only reason not to inquire into such a complaint is that the complainant is not a citizen or resident of the European Union.

In its Resolution of 25 October 2007, the European Parliament welcomed the above declaration of intent and invited the Ombudsman to consider concluding a Memorandum of Understanding with the EIB.

On 5 December 2007, I wrote (*Annex 1*) to the President of the EIB, Mr Philippe Maystadt, to invite discussions on the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding on the basis of a note drawn up by my services (*Annex 2*) concerning the key issues that would need to be addressed.

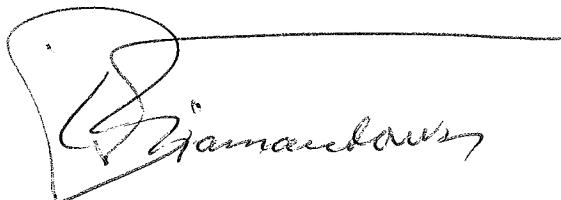
On 9 January 2008, Mr Maystadt sent a reply (*Annex 3*) indicating that he shares the objective of reaching agreement on the terms and conditions of a Memorandum of Understanding on the basis of the analysis in my letter of 5 December 2007. He also expressed the Bank's support for my intention to inform the President of the European Parliament of the opening of discussions on the Memorandum of Understanding and, more generally, endorsed my efforts to ensure maximum transparency and appropriate communications coverage for this initiative.

I therefore have the pleasure to inform you that, following the invitation contained in the European Parliament's Resolution of 25 October 2007, negotiations on a Memorandum of Understanding between the European Ombudsman and the European Investment Bank will begin on 7 February 2008, with the visit of an EIB

delegation to my office in Strasbourg. I shall keep you informed of the progress of the negotiations.

Copies of the letters and note mentioned above are attached to the present letter, which will be published on the website of the European Ombudsman in order to ensure maximum transparency.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Diamandouros', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial 'P'.

P. Nikiforos DIAMANDOUROS

cc: Mrs Beres, Chairwoman of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs
Mr Ouzký, Chairman of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and
Food Safety.
Mr Libicki, Chairman of the Committee on Petitions.

Enclosures: 3