

FRANS TIMMERMANS
First Vice-President

Brussels, **27. 03. 2015**
BM/kr (2015)738849

Dear Ms O'Reilly,

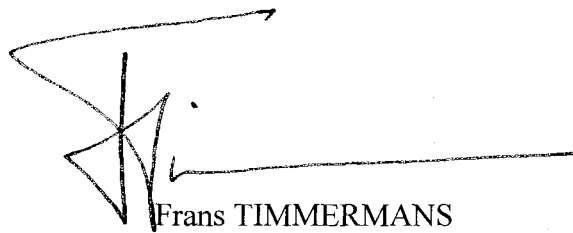
Thank you very much for your letter of 19 February 2015 regarding the Open Government Partnership.

I share your interest in this multilateral initiative and support its objectives. As you know, the Commission is committed to high standards of transparency and accountability, and the promotion of an open dialogue with civil society representatives. We have developed an extensive set of tools and instruments in these areas which we keep under permanent review.

However, it is not clear that a more formal relationship between the European institutions and the Open Government Partnership would be feasible. Its legal nature and the rights and obligations deriving from participation, in particular in relation to governance, are not well defined. The initiative is intended first and foremost for states and as you rightly note, the European Union is not a state. The requirement for National Action Plans containing concrete and measurable commitments could thus not easily be applied in this case. The financial and human resource implications would also require further analysis.

Given these uncertainties and constraints, the Commission would prefer to focus its efforts on the consolidation, improvement and development of the existing means it has put in place to achieve the highest standards of transparency and accountability.

Yours sincerely,



Frans TIMMERMANS

Ms Emily O'REILLY
European Ombudsman

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