

The Hague, 13 February 2012

Open letter to the Dutch society and its political leaders

We, the Heads of Missions of Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia in the Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to express our concern on the launch of the website Meldpunt Midden en Oost Europeanen whereby one is enabled to place a complaint against nationals from Central and Eastern European countries living and working in the Netherlands.

In a modern European society such an issue must be addressed on the basis of values that Europe and European Union stand for, as well as on facts. The website action, although being solely a party initiative, does not contribute to a substantive fact-based discussion on the situation of EU citizens working in the Netherlands. Rather, it encourages negative perception of a particular group of the EU citizens within the Dutch society - a perception not supported by facts. Furthermore, targeting a selected group of people living in the Netherlands is clearly discriminatory and degrading in its intention and purpose.

The statistics clearly show that our fellow citizens contribute significantly to the growth of the Dutch economy and the Dutch budget. The truth also is that our citizens do not take jobs from the Dutch nationals. It has been proven beyond doubt, that labour mobility is, on the whole, beneficial to the Netherlands. In this context, we welcome the clear statement by VNO-NCW President Mr Bernard Wientjes. We find it important to recall that the freedom of movement of labour is one of the pillars of the European Union and it is intrinsically linked to the freedom of movement of goods, services and capital - all from which the Netherlands has profited so much as a member of the enlarged European Union.

The authorities of our countries, as well as our Embassies, cooperate with the Dutch authorities in order to properly identify the causes of some challenges related to the labour migration, generate solutions and apply them. Those should be implemented within the legal and institutional framework of the Netherlands and that of the EU.

The website in question does not promote dialogue, nor identifies causes of some challenges associated with free movement of workers, in generating solutions or in promoting the cooperation required to implement those solutions.

For decades, the Netherlands and the Dutch society have been perceived in our countries as examples of freedom and tolerance. We believe that the Netherlands should uphold this

positive image and, therefore, we invite the Dutch society and its political leaders to distance themselves from this deplorable initiative.



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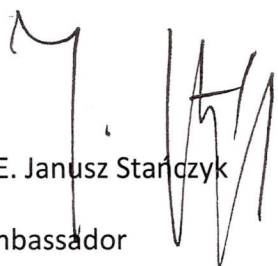
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