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Dear Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you for your letter of 17 September 2014.

I appreciate your words welcoming my [Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change](#). We need to make a new start for Europe and I count on your support to get us moving to deliver it.

Growth can only make a meaningful difference if it is able to last or continue for a long time. The [Treaty on European Union](#) makes it clear in its Preamble stating that the promotion of economic and social progress of the peoples of Europe takes into account the principle of sustainable development. Furthermore, Article 3 paragraph 3 of the same Treaty states that the Union "shall work for the sustainable development of Europe based on economic growth...".

Acting sustainably requires all of us to function outside closed silos and in a new, collaborative way. This is exactly what I set out to do when presenting the [new Commission](#). In it there are no first or second-class Commissioners – there are team leaders and team players working towards delivering the political priorities. I want all Commissioners to work together in a spirit of collegiality and mutual dependence. I want to overcome silo-mentalities and introduce a new collaborative way of working in areas where Europe can really make a difference.

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To make this new, more collaborative approach deliver better results, a number of portfolios have been reshaped and streamlined. This is the case, for instance, of the Environment and Maritime Affairs and Fisheries portfolios. These portfolios have been combined to reflect the twin logic of "Blue" and "Green" Growth – environment and maritime conservation policies can and should play a key role in creating jobs, preserving resources, stimulating growth and encouraging investment. Protecting the environment and maintaining our competitiveness have to go hand-in-hand and both are about a sustainable future. A similar logic has been applied in making one Commissioner in charge of both Climate Action and Energy policy. Strengthening the share of renewable energies is not only a matter of a responsible climate change policy. It is, at the same time, an industrial policy which is imperative if Europe still wants to have affordable and sustainable energy in the medium term. Both new portfolios will contribute to the Project Team 'Energy Union' steered and coordinated by a Vice-President.

Sustainable development is the simultaneous consideration of economics, life, environment, and human well-being. In this sense, sustainability implies long-term and working for the benefit of future generations. I would find it too limiting to box-in sustainable development under the responsibility of a single Commissioner. Sustainable development is a Treaty-based principle and as such it should be taken into account by all institutions of the European Union when taking action to promote the economic and social progress of Europeans.

Yours faithfully,



Cc: Members of the European Parliament:

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Ms Margrete Auken
Mr Guillaume Balas
Ms Catherine Bearder
Ms Lynn Boylan
Mr Reinhard Bütikofer
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