

# socialplatform

## Open letter to EU Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs

June 2, 2010

Dear Ministers,

**On June 7 at the EPSCO Council meeting in Brussels, following the presentation of the progress report on the Article 19 anti-discrimination Directive, we ask you to continue to show your political will “to complete the existing legal framework”<sup>1</sup> to adopt a strong law that is consistent with the Race Equality Directive.**

The anti-discrimination Directive is crucial to protect the millions of people you represent in Europe from unfair treatment. For it to be effective, its text should take into account the views of all European citizens who face discrimination. Social Platform is an alliance of 43 pan-European civil society networks representing thousands of civil society organisations across all 27 member states. Our expertise is based on the knowledge drawn from our members, including the six European networks<sup>2</sup> working specifically on the issue.

Social Platform contributed to the debate on Article 19 in the Council under the Spanish Presidency, submitting our [common proposals](#) (February 2010) and those of our member the [European Disability Forum](#) (March 2010).

Some progress has been made under the Spanish Presidency on the anti-discrimination Directive, specifically on:

- Article 2: Ensuring that discrimination or harassment by association is now included in the definition of discrimination, as recognized in the European Court of Justice case law (C-303/06).
- Article 3: Clarifying that member states may only provide differences of treatment on a person's religion or belief in respect of admission to educational institutions but not on any of the other grounds
- Recital 12b: Ensuring that the definition of harassment is now in line with previous directives.

We expect the upcoming Belgian presidency to advance this work of the Council and continue to enable civil society organisations to contribute to the negotiation process by

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<sup>1</sup> [Spanish Presidency Progress Report](#) on the directive of May 17, 2010

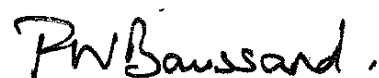
<sup>2</sup> AGE-the European Older People's Platform, European Disability Forum (EDF), European Network Against Racism (ENAR), the European Youth Forum (YFJ), the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe), and the European Women's Lobby.

publicly displaying presidency proposals on the Council website, and by organising debriefing meetings with European civil society organisations on the progress of the negotiation, as the Spanish Presidency did in May.

Yours sincerely,



Conny Reuter  
President



Pierre Baussand  
Acting Director

Cc: - Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Permanent Representatives  
- Social Affairs Attachés of the Permanent Representations in Brussels  
- Vice-President Viviane Reding  
- Commissioner László Andor