

TO THE ATTENTION OF:

José Manuel Barroso,
President of the European Commission

Neelie Kroes,
Vice-President in charge of Digital Agenda

Viviane Reding,
Vice-President in charge of Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship

Cecilia Malmström,
EU Commissioner responsible for the Home Affairs

Gregory Paulger,
Director-General for DG Communication

Robert Madelin,
Director General for Communications Networks, Content & Technology

Françoise Le Bail,
Director-General for DG Justice

Stefano Manservigi,
Director General for Home Affairs

Klaus-Heiner Lehne,
Chair of the Committee on Legal Affairs – JURI – European Parliament

Elmar Brok,
Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs – AFET – European Parliament

February 12th, 2014

Dear Madams and Sirs,

We are writing to you to raise concern about a misuse of information from the *European Commission's Anti-Corruption Report* and more precisely *the Annex Bulgaria to the EU Anti-Corruption Report*, published on February 3rd, 2014.

On February 5th, 2014, on page 9 and page 10 of its print edition, the Bulgarian *Sega* newspaper published an article by Svetoslav Terziyski entitled "Brussels for Bulgaria: It is not a circus, it is a menagerie" (a scanned copy of the original article could be found in Appendix 1 and an English version of the article could be found in Appendix 2).

Under the pretext of citing the *Annex Bulgaria to the EU Anti-Corruption Report*, the author writes the following:

'Delyan Peevski is "a controversial figure at the head of the State Agency for National Security, who became a cause of concern both in Bulgaria and abroad". He is the only person who has been mentioned twice in the Report as his name is included in its media part which states that "media ownership is increasingly concentrated in the hands of the same group of people (Peevski, his mother Irena Krasteva, and their "creditor" Tzvetan Vassilev), compromising editorial independence".'

Regarding the said citation, we would like to draw your attention to the following:



1. After a careful reading of the European Commission's reports – the EU Anti-Corruption Report and the Annex Bulgaria to the EU Anti-Corruption Report— and a thorough verification of the official sources of information used for their preparation, we assured ourselves that the name of Mr. Tzvetan Vassilev, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Corporate Commercial Bank AD, was not mentioned in the context used by the journalist or anywhere else within the reports. Thus the said citation constitutes malicious falsehood under Bulgarian law and violates the ethical standards of the *Union of Publishers in Bulgaria* of which *Sega* is a member. Nevertheless, before we take any steps to defend the good name and reputation of Mr. Tzvetan Vassilev, we would like to receive your confirmation that the abovementioned citation is not a part of the European Commission's reports and there are no other documents (e.g. available only to journalists) which might give the journalist the grounds to cite such statements on behalf of the European Commission.
2. The statement that Tzvetan Vassilev is the "creditor" of Delyan Peevski and his mother Irena Krasteva is false. Mr. Peevski and his mother are not economically or legally connected to Mr. Tzvetan Vassilev. This can be easily verified through the Commercial Register of the Republic of Bulgaria as well as from the electronic databases for company information. Furthermore, Mr. Vassilev has publicly stated on multiple occasions that he does not finance media. In confirmation of the latter, we have attached the English versions of Mr. Vassilev's interviews for the German radio *Deutsche Welle* (Appendix 3) of 2013, the Bulgarian national TV network *bTV* (Appendix 4) of 2011, and the *Pari* financial newspaper (Appendix 5) of 2010.
3. The *Sega* newspaper and the other print and electronic media which are part of the *Union of Publishers in Bulgaria* have been leading a purposeful and ill-natured campaign against Corporate Commercial Bank AD and Mr. Tzvetan Vassilev since 2009. This malicious campaign is well-known to the Bulgarian public. We, however, express our concern that the false statement attributed to the European Commission and cited by the author of the article

in the *Sega* newspaper constitutes intentional misuse of the reports of the Commission for private interests. Not only it is aimed at tarnishing the reputation of Corporate Commercial Bank AD, but also aimed at lowering the prestige of the Commission.

We would like to thank you for your time and consideration and we are looking forward to your reply.

Best regards,


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Orlin Rusev

Executive Director

Chairman of the Management Board




.....
Alexander Pantaleev

Executive Director

Member of the Management Board