

Brussels, 19th October 2016

To the attention of Mr Minister-President of Wallonia, Paul Magnette, and the Parliament of Wallonia

Dear Mr Minister-President and Members of the Parliament of Wallonia,

As Progressive Members of the European Parliament, we would like to express our full support to your opposition to CETA.

This agreement has been negotiated behind closed doors without the consultation of elected representatives of citizens and raises many democratic issues. Beyond the serious concerns you raised on this free-trade agreement, you clearly expressed the will to put the debate in a transparent way at the heart of the decision making process. We have conveyed similar preoccupations to yours several times with respect to our parliamentary activities. Indeed, what is at stake in CETA goes beyond a simple technical agreement on liberalization of goods and services: it has to do with our social and environmental norms, the regulatory capacity of public authorities and the independence of our justice.

By rejecting the ultimatum imposed by the European Commission and the various threats formulated in recent days, you managed to make visible a democratic vitality. Here and there, voices are raising and calling for reason. However reason cannot exist without thorough and informed debate made of conflicting arguments and which kind of democracy would be one in which decisions would be made in advance?

In the context of a profound democratic crisis, your position and political courage are exemplary. Listening and answering to civil society's concerns are nowadays a necessity for all politicians because a democracy isolated from a vigorous civil society and without political representatives accountable is a democracy emptied of its substance.

Sincerely,