

"Chairman's Headed Paper"

Dear Colleague,

There is overwhelming evidence that, despite the entry into force of Directive 2000/35/EC on late payment in commercial transactions is still a general problem within the EU. Given the importance of public procurement in the EU (more than 1 943 billion euro per year), late payment by public authorities has a strong negative impact on enterprises. Moreover, diverging payment attitudes across the EU might hamper business participation in public tenders, which distorts competition and undermines the functioning of the internal market.

I also believe that this is issue which we as parliamentarians acting as legislators and public representatives recognise as of direct concern to our respective electorates

Consequently, my Committee proposes to organise a Hearing with National Parliaments on "Combating Late Payment" particularly as covered by the proposal for a Directive on combating late payment in commercial transactions (Recast) (COM(2009) 126 final). The proposed event would be on **Tuesday 26 January 2010** from 15:00 to 18:30 at the European Parliament in Brussels.

I would like to invite a maximum of two representatives from National Parliaments to participate at the event and to make a short presentation of your Committee's views on the proposal. Should you be unable to attend, we would welcome any written contribution which can be distributed to the participants.

Please find attached the draft programme for the Hearing. The practical details regarding the meeting will be forwarded to your Parliament's Representatives/Services directly responsible for relations with the European Parliament.

I look forward to your participation in our discussions.

Yours faithfully

Malcolm Harbour