



European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
Confédération européenne des syndicats (CES)

Brussels, 15 December 2010

JM/sw

Mr Herman Van Rompuy
President of the European Council
175, Rue de la Loi
1048 Brussels

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Dear President,

I understand that you will be proposing to the forthcoming Summit later this week that the EU changes its treaty to permit the establishment of a permanent crisis mechanism for the eurozone.

I want to remind European leaders that strict adherence to the rules also means defending the EU's social dimension.

It is widely expected that the Treaty amendment to be agreed by the European Council will say that "Member states whose currency is the euro may establish amongst themselves a stability mechanism to safeguard the stability of the euro area as a whole. The granting of financial assistance under the mechanism will be made subject to strict conditions."

It is clear once more that the focus is on financial discipline at the expense of the wider objectives enshrined in the Treaties. The Heads of State and Government should remember that weakening the social market economy and other positive aspects of the Treaties will turn people against Europe. The EU must stop acting like a punishment squad and in particular strictly respect the key objectives of high employment, high social and regional cohesion, as defined in Article 6, and not breach the autonomy of collective bargaining as reflected in Article 153 of the Treaty'. At the moment, the review of minimum wages in Ireland is a clear breach of those provisions.

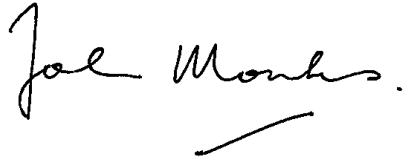
On a separate issue – as there is to be a revision of the treaty, can you include our proposal for a social progress protocol to redress the balance between the fundamental right to collective bargaining and the four freedoms of the single market. At present decisions of the European Court of Justice are suggesting that free movement is absolute and over-rides fundamental rights. This cannot be right and a Social Progress

Protocol would clarify the situation.

I hope you can take this forward.

I am sending a copy of this letter to President Barroso.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Monks." The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath the name.

John Monks
General Secretary