



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Margot Wallström, Vice-President of the European Commission
Vladimír Špidla, Member of the European Commission

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Dr. Brigitte Mühlenbruch
Vice-President
European Platform of Women Scientists
Auf dem Uhlberg 10
D- 53127 Bonn

Dear Madam,

As you know, the European Parliament elections will take place between 4th and 7th June. This year will be the 30th anniversary of the first direct elections to the European Parliament. The June elections will also be an unprecedented exercise in trans-national democracy, with all the 27 Member States holding elections for the first time together and over 375 million citizens called to the polls. It will be a decisive moment for democracy in Europe.

The European Commission is fully committed to supporting and complementing a broad and ambitious information campaign launched by the European Parliament. The challenge we face is to inform all the citizens of their right to vote and stand as candidates, and to contribute to increasing the turnout, which, since the first elections in 1979, has steadily declined.

An important focus of our communication efforts therefore includes spreading the message about the European elections and the importance of voting to women across the European Union. Obviously, this is no easy task, as women cannot be considered a uniform target group. We therefore need to harness as many multipliers as possible to reach out to women of different interests.

You, as a member of the Network of women in decision-making in politics and economy, can reach out to citizens across Europe. We would be grateful if you could join us in our efforts.

There could be different means of spreading the message through your network -- be it by raising this issue at your conferences, inviting Members of the European Parliament or Commissioners to speak to the members of your network, providing links to the European Parliament elections website (www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2009), or by mentioning the elections in your internal communication material.

For our part, we would be happy to provide you with all the support necessary to fulfil this endeavour. The Commission is currently preparing elections related information material targeting women specifically, which we will be happy to share with you, but we also remain at your disposal for any other form of cooperation you deem useful.

Any feedback, input and ideas from you on how your network would be greatly appreciated. The European Parliament elections represent the pinnacle of the European democratic process; it is therefore particularly important that all segments of our society are made aware of the importance of this event to their daily lives.

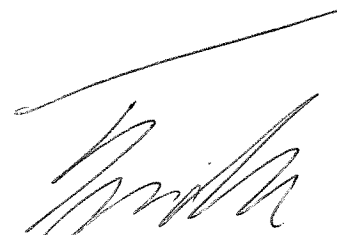
For further information, we invite you to contact Mrs Ylva Tiveus, Director in the Directorate-General Communication (Tel: +32-2-296.66.73, Fax: +32-2-299.92.07 and e-mail address: ylva.tiveus@ec.europa.eu).

We look forward to hearing from you soon and to a fruitful cooperation in this important communication endeavour.

Yours sincerely,



Margot WALLSTRÖM



Vladimír ŠPIDLA