



Brussels, 14 October 2014

## **'Stoiber prescribing the wrong medicine'**

### **Almost one third of 'Stoiber group' members oppose biased final report**

The European Commission's High Level Group on Administrative Burdens [1], chaired by Dr Edmund Stoiber, has drawn severe criticism from 4 of a total of 15 Members [2] for its final report [3] pushing an outdated, deregulatory agenda.

The views of members representing trade unions, environmental groups, consumer organisations and health groups are presented in a 'dissenting opinion' [4] – which will be published alongside the final report. The opinion argues that the Stoiber report's pursuit of reducing the overall costs of regulation on business will come at the expense of health, safety and environmental protection that these regulations provide.

The recommendations proposed by Stoiber and opposed by the dissenting members include

- setting a target for reducing regulatory costs
- offsetting new regulatory 'burdens' by removing existing 'burdens'
- exempting SMEs from 'EU obligations'

**EEB Policy Director Pieter de Pous**, speaking on behalf of Nina Renshaw, *"By promoting deregulation as a recipe for more jobs and growth, this group has entered the realm of fact free policy making. These recommendations would take Europe 30 years back in time and would only improve its popularity among yesterdays' business lobbyists, not its citizens and its forward looking industry."*

**ETUC representative Heidi Rønne** said *"I am in favour of cutting unnecessary regulation. To do that you need to identify what is unnecessary. I firmly oppose any general commitment or arbitrary target that puts at risk sensible health, safety and environmental protection."*

**Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC)** commented: *"Consumer organisations do not oppose efforts to 'better regulate' if it leads to efficient laws working to the benefit of all EU citizens. But we dismiss cutting regulations if it ends up as a one-sided attempt to reduce costs for businesses. Such an approach fails to recognise the cost to society of not regulating. The Stoiber Group report shows a blind eye to this which is why we oppose its key recommendations."*

**Peggy Maguire** speaking on behalf of the **European Public Health Alliance**, which was represented on the Stoiber group by its previous Secretary General, said: *"It is extraordinary that while austerity is pushing democracy and European legitimacy to the brink, there are people still intent on defending the de-regulatory status quo with little regard for the greater public interest. 'Soft' voluntary measures do little if anything for public health. Regulation promotes innovation where we need it most."*

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[1] The High Level Group on Administrative Burdens, chaired by Dr Edmund Stoiber, was set up in 2007 to advise the European Commission on reducing the level of administrative burdens on business and other stakeholders. As Barroso II comes to a conclusion, the group is releasing its final report with the conclusions and advice for the future. The report will be launched at a conference on 14 October attended by the members of the group including Dr Edmund Stoiber and outgoing Commission President Barroso. 4 members support a dissenting opinion.

[2] These members are: Nina Renshaw (Transport & Environment Deputy Director), Heidi Rønne-Møller (EU Adviser of the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions), Monika Kosinska (Ex-EPHA Secretary General) and Jim Murray, former BEUC director who represent environmental organisations, workers, public health and consumers on the group.

[3] Final Report: High Level Group on Administrative Burdens

[4] Dissenting Opinion

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