



February 5, 2010

Mr. Jerzy Buzek  
President of the European Parliament  
European Parliament

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to convey our sincere hope that the European Parliament will consent to the interim agreement between the European Union and the United States of America on the Terrorist Finance Tracking Program (TFTP) during the plenary debate and vote anticipated this week. The TFTP agreement is important to our common efforts to prevent terrorism. It provides narrowly targeted and valuable data, fully protects individual data privacy, and is subject to multiple layers of review and oversight. Given Parliament's divided February 4 committee vote, we recognized we have more work to do in bringing all parties on board with the agreement. In this spirit, we would be most grateful if you could kindly share this message on our behalf with your fellow members and colleagues.

The interim agreement provides an important U.S. commitment to European security and privacy. It also provides a sound and careful legal basis for continuing the TFTP during the transition period between the pre- and post-Lisbon Treaty EU structures. This interim period will provide time for serious and substantive consultations with the European Parliament, Council, and Commission. It is clear that any future negotiation with the European Union on the TFTP must be conducted in a manner that enables the Parliament to be able to make an informed decision on whether to grant consent to any such agreement.

Provided this interim agreement remains in force while we negotiate its post-Lisbon Treaty successor, we are confident Parliament's views will be heard, considered, and responded to by the Commission, Council and the United States. We are willing to explore ways that the successor agreement could be even further improved. In the course of negotiating the successor agreement, the United States would welcome an opportunity to address the points raised in Rapporteur Hennis-Plasschaert's February 4 report and any other remaining questions.

To that end, the United States would welcome an opportunity to offer Parliament's committee an in-depth briefing on the program. We would also invite Parliament's representatives to visit Washington and speak directly with key national security officials who oversee and implement this program. We would appreciate the opportunity to allow our technical and legal experts to clarify the program's multiple layers of overlapping controls and data privacy safeguards. We would also like to facilitate discussions between members of Parliament and relevant senior counterparts in the U.S. Congress with oversight responsibilities for this program.

Parliament's consent to this agreement would enable the EU and U.S. to negotiate a post-Lisbon Treaty successor agreement without sacrificing the information sharing needed in order for the TFTP to function with optimal value. We should find a way to not only ensure consistency with our respective laws, but to allow the TFTP to serve its intended purpose in tracking terrorists' financing.

We realize that the way in which this program originally came to light continues to cloud the debate today. Looking to the future, we believe the subsequent story of EU-U.S. efforts to put the TFTP on a clearly cooperative course will be one that makes our citizens proud of multilateral diplomacy in finding ways to prevent terrorism and abide by our transatlantic values in upholding the rule of law. This agreement should help us write a new chapter toward closer partnership and mutual trust.

The TFTP is consistent with the strongest traditions of European civil liberties, even as it provides tremendous counter-terrorism value to Europe and to the United States. Withholding consent, as envisioned by the current resolution approved by committee, could jeopardize a valuable and carefully constructed counter-terrorism program of importance to countries affected by terrorism around the world.

The United States and European Union must remain partners as global actors. We urge the European Parliament to use its authorities to consent to this agreement with the United States. We thank you for Parliament's consideration on this important issue.

Sincerely Yours,



Timothy F. Geithner  
Secretary of the Treasury



Hillary Rodham Clinton  
Secretary of State