



Jean-Claude Juncker,  
President of the European Commission

## Mission Letter

Brussels, 2 August 2016

**Julian King**

# Commissioner for the Security Union

Dear Julian,

You are becoming a Member of the European Commission at a particularly challenging time for the European Union. Since the beginning of the mandate of this Commission, we have an exceptional opportunity, but also an obligation, to make a fresh start, to address the difficult geo-political situation, to strengthen economic recovery and to build a Europe that delivers jobs and growth for its citizens.

I want the Commission which I preside to be a strong and political team. And I want you, with your political skills and experience, to fully play your part in this team.

We will have a lot to do in the years to come and we will have to show a united and clear sense of purpose at all times. In the Political Guidelines for the new European Commission that I presented to the European Parliament on 15 July 2014, I set out a new Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change, focused on ten priorities. I had discussed and developed this Agenda in detail in meetings with all the political groups in the European Parliament. The Political Guidelines are, therefore, somewhat akin to a political contract that I concluded with the European Parliament to mark the beginning of a new mandate and to prioritise the work of the new Commission. These Guidelines are more relevant than ever. I will be looking for your support, creativity and action to help deliver concrete results.

Following our recent discussions, I would like you to be the **Commissioner for the Security Union**, working under the guidance of the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights and supporting the work of the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship. In this Mission Letter, I set out what I expect from you as a Member of the Commission as well as specific goals for which you will be responsible for reaching during our mandate.

## A new way of working

Delivering the priorities of the Political Guidelines requires a reform of the way the Commission has operated up until now. Reform means change. I want all Commissioners to show that we are open to change and ready to adapt to it.

I want the Commission as a whole to be more than the sum of its parts. I therefore want us to work together as a strong team, cooperating across portfolios to produce integrated, well-grounded and well-explained initiatives that lead to clear results. I want us to overcome silo mentalities by working jointly on those areas where we can really make a difference. We cannot and should not do everything: I want the European Commission to be bigger and more ambitious on big things, and smaller and more modest on small things. I also want us to focus our energy and efforts on ensuring effective implementation and follow-up on the ground. I count on you to play your part in this new collaborative way of working.

To facilitate this, I have decided to organise the Commission differently from its predecessors. I have entrusted a number of well-defined priority projects to the Vice-Presidents and asked them to steer and coordinate work across the Commission in the key areas of the Political Guidelines. This allows for a better focus and a much stronger cooperation amongst Members of the College, with several Commissioners working closely together as a team, led by the Vice-Presidents, in compositions that may change according to need and as new projects develop over time.

To empower them to deliver on their priority projects, the Vice-Presidents act on my behalf and help exercise my rights and prerogatives in their area of responsibility. In particular, the Vice-Presidents are in charge of:

- Steering and coordinating work in their area of responsibility. This involves bringing together several Commissioners and different parts of the Commission to shape coherent policies and deliver results.
- Assessing how and whether proposed new initiatives fit with the focus of the Political Guidelines. As a general rule, I will not include a new initiative in the Commission Work Programme or place it on the agenda of the College unless this is recommended to me by one of the Vice-Presidents on the basis of sound arguments and a clear narrative that is coherent with the priority projects of the Political Guidelines.
- Managing and organising the representation of the Commission in their area of responsibility in the European Parliament, the Council, national Parliaments and other institutional settings as well as at international level.
- Promoting a proactive and coordinated approach to the follow-up, implementation, and communication of our priority policies across the Union and internationally.

Respect for the principles of subsidiarity, proportionality and better regulation is at the core of the work of this Commission. We concentrate our efforts on those areas where only joint action at European level can deliver the desired results. When we act, we always look for the most efficient and least burdensome approach. Beyond these areas, we should leave action to the Member States where they are more legitimate and better equipped to give effective policy responses at national, regional or local level.

I therefore pay particular attention to the opinion of the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, before including any new initiative in the Commission Work Programme or putting it on the agenda of the College. This Vice-President is also entrusted with the regular monitoring of procedures linked to the preparation of delegated and implementing acts to ensure full political ownership.

I also pay particular attention to the opinion of the Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources as regards the impact of our activities on the financial resources and staff of the European Commission. We have the privilege of being supported by an excellent, highly motivated European civil service and a professionally well-run administration, but its resources are limited and have to be used to best effect. This is also why I want resources to be allocated to our priorities and to make sure that every action we take delivers maximum performance and value added. I also want all Commissioners to ensure sound financial management of the programmes under their responsibility, taking all necessary measures to protect the EU budget from fraud.

Under my supervision, Vice-Presidents are supported by the Secretariat-General in their tasks but primarily rely on close cooperation with the relevant Commissioners and the services that report to them. In addition, Vice-Presidents are able to draw on any service in the Commission whose work is relevant for their area of responsibility, in consultation with the relevant Commissioner.

With regard to the Union's external action, I have launched a pragmatic partnership with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who, according to the Treaties, is one of the Vice-Presidents of the Commission. The High Representative and I have agreed that she will play her role as a Commission Vice-President to the full. She notably steers and coordinates the work of all Commissioners with regard to external relations through a Commissioners' Group on External Action to develop a joint approach. This Group meets at least once a month in varying thematic and/or geographic formats, according to the needs identified by the High Representative/Vice-President or by me. The High Representative/Vice-President regularly reports back to me and the whole College about geopolitical developments. To liaise more effectively with the other Members of the College, we agreed that she has her Headquarters in the Berlaymont, and that the Commission puts a Cabinet of an appropriate size at her disposal, about half of which will be Commission officials. We also agreed that, whenever she sees the necessity to do so, she will ask the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations and other Commissioners to deputise in areas related to Commission competence.

Working together in this new way across the Commission helps ensure that the final decisions we take as a College are well-prepared and focused on what is important and that we are all equipped to explain and defend them. We need to show a team spirit to make the system work. Our success depends on each and every one of you: on the team leadership of the Vice-Presidents and on the readiness of Commissioners to be strong team players. I would ask you all to work together to ensure that this new system works well.

## The Security Union portfolio

You will be the Commissioner for the Security Union. You will, in particular, contribute to projects steered and coordinated by the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. For initiatives requiring a decision from the Commission, you will, as a rule, liaise closely with the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Security is one of the pressing challenges I have highlighted in my Political Guidelines, which recalled that *“Combating cross-border crime and terrorism is a common European responsibility”*. This was followed-up by the adoption of the European Agenda on Security on 28 April 2015, setting out the main

actions envisaged to ensure an effective EU response to security threats over the period 2015-2020. In particular, three priorities were identified as needing to be addressed: tackling terrorism and preventing radicalisation, disrupting organised crime, and fighting cybercrime. Repeated subsequent terrorist attacks have underlined the importance and urgency of making swift progress towards an operational and effective Security Union, as highlighted in the Commission Communication of 20 April 2016<sup>1</sup>. The focus of your portfolio work should therefore be on concrete operational measures where the action of the EU can have an impact – and where we can show that this does not compromise our commitment to fundamental rights and values.

During our mandate, I would like you to support the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship in the following tasks:

- Ensuring the swift implementation of the steps needed to build an effective and genuine Security Union as set out in the Commission Communication of 20 April 2016.
- Identifying where the EU can make a real difference in fighting terrorism, including measures that can address the threat posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters.
- Improving information and intelligence sharing, including through the initiatives to upgrade Europol's European Counter-Terrorism Centre into a stronger structure and through the development of efficient and interoperable information exchange systems.
- Reinforcing the security response to radicalisation, in particular through information sharing; in addition to supporting the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, this will require close cooperation with the Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, the Commissioner for Education, Culture and Sport and the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility.
- Reinforcing the capacity to protect critical infrastructures and soft targets; in addition to supporting the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, this will require close cooperation with the Commissioner for Transport, the Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society and the Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy.
- Fighting against cybercrime through enhanced cybersecurity and digital intelligence; in addition to supporting the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, this will require close cooperation with the Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society.
- Ensuring that EU-financed security research targets the needs of security practitioners and develops solutions to forthcoming security challenges; in addition to supporting the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, this will require close cooperation with the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation.

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<sup>1</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council delivering on the European Agenda on Security to fight against terrorism and pave the way towards an effective and genuine Security Union - COM(2016)230 final of 20 April 2016. See also European Polical Strategy Centre (EPSC) Strategic Note "Towards a 'Security Union' – Bolstering the EU Counter Terrorism Response", issue 12/2016 of 20 April 2016 ([ec.europa.eu/epsc/pdf/publications/strategic\\_note\\_issue\\_12.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/epsc/pdf/publications/strategic_note_issue_12.pdf)).

- Supporting the work of the Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources, to ensure a secure working environment and to protect our staff and buildings against the threat of terrorism.

A Task Force composed by experts from the Commission services and supervised by the Director-General for Home Affairs will support you. This Task Force will in particular include experts from Units B4 (Innovation and Industry for Security) and D1 (Terrorism and Crisis Management) of the Directorate-General for Home Affairs (DG HOME), from Units A2 (Aviation Security) and A4 (Land and Maritime Security) of the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE) and from Unit H1 (Cybersecurity) of the Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT) as well as the relevant experts from Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER). I would ask you to work on effective cooperative working arrangements with the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, under the guidance of the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. I would invite you to report on a regular basis, at least once per month, to the College of Commissioners, on the progress made towards an operational and effective Security Union. Representation in the European Parliament and in the Council on issues related to the Security Union will, as a rule, be ensured by the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, unless otherwise decided on a case by case basis, by the First Vice-President, in agreement with the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship.

## Our principles: ethics and transparency

We must abide by the highest possible professional and ethical standards at all times. I want the European Commission to lead the way as a modern, efficient and transparent public administration, open to all input that helps us deliver work of a consistently high quality, in full independence and impartiality. Our conduct must be unimpeachable. You have received the Code of Conduct of the Members of the European Commission. I expect all of us to honour both the word and the spirit of the Code.

You will have seen that the Political Guidelines include a new commitment to transparency. Transparency should be a priority for the new Commission and I expect all of us to make public, on our respective web pages, all the contacts and meetings we hold with professional organisations or self-employed individuals on any matter relating to EU policy-making and implementation. It is very important to be transparent where specific interests related to the Commission's work on legislative initiatives or financial matters are discussed with such organisations or individuals.

## Working in partnership for Europe

The Commission's partnership with the other EU institutions and the Member States, as defined in the Treaties, is fundamental. The Union only succeeds when everyone is pulling in the same direction: this is why we should continue to work to forge a common understanding between the institutions about what we want to achieve and how we will go about it.

The Commission's relationship with the European Parliament is the source of our democratic legitimacy. This must, therefore, be a political and not a technocratic partnership. I expect all Commissioners to invest in this relationship. The meetings with the parliamentary committee(s) over the weeks to come will be an opportunity for you to lay the foundations for a productive working relationship, to explain how your work will contribute to joint political priorities, and to demonstrate your commitment and suitability for your broader role as a Member of the College.

Effective policy-making also requires a deep understanding of every one of the Member States, of their common challenges and of their diversity. While fulfilling your obligation to participate in Commission meetings and engage with the European institutions, I want you all to be politically active in the Member States and in dialogues with citizens, by presenting and communicating our common agenda, listening to ideas and engaging with stakeholders. In this context, I want all Commissioners to commit to a new partnership with national Parliaments: they deserve particular attention and I want, under the coordination of the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, important proposals or initiatives to be presented and explained in national Parliaments by Members of the Commission. This should also allow us to deepen the country-specific knowledge within our institution and to build mutual understanding and effective channels of communication between the national and the European level.

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The European Union is in one of the most testing periods in its history. As I said in my Mission Letters at the beginning of the mandate, the effects of the economic and financial crisis are still causing great hardship in many parts of Europe. We live in a Union with a 29th state of unemployed people, many of them young people who feel side-lined. Until this situation has changed, this 29th state must be our number one concern. In addition, we have to cope with the refugee crisis, with the aftermath of the UK referendum and with the increased threat of terrorism. This is why I need all Commissioners to be very determined and very responsible in carrying out their work as Members of this Commission, in full independence and without seeking or taking instructions from any Government or other institution, body, office or entity and with only the promotion of the general interest of the Union in mind.

I am looking forward to working with you on the new start that our European Union needs now.



Jean-Claude JUNCKER