Dear Colleagues,

After a very demanding phase of democratic scrutiny and evaluation of the next college of commissioners, it is time to assess the process and evaluate what we managed to achieve.

It is fair to say that, besides the influence our political family will have in the college provided by the nine S&D commissioners, our political Group has managed to exert real influence on the programme of the new European Commission. Some of the commitments extracted from President-elect Ursula von der Leyen were unthinkable months ago and, equally important, our main flagship initiatives and priorities will be under the stewardship of commissioners from our political family.

We now have the chance to steer the destiny of our continent towards a more ecological and social future. However, let us not be mistaken, we have to continue to apply pressure and make sure that these proposals will be translated into legislation and be supported by sufficient financial resources. To this end, we need to keep up our hard work and constructive approach and, more importantly, commit to continue this work during this legislative period in full coordination with our commissioners.

Our strength lies in our unity. In order to shape the present and work for a better future we need to act with unity. There is no time to waste, the opportunity to influence the European agenda is there and we cannot miss it. It is important to keep in mind what is at stake in the moment we vote on the new college of commissioners.
Red & Green Sustainable Development

As one of our flagship proposals, we demanded a European Green Deal and a comprehensive Climate Law by June 2020, which will work to address the concerns of EU citizens. Not only did we get it but also this important task will be delivered by Frans Timmermans in the first 100 days! This will include our proposal to reduce CO2 emissions by at least 50% by 2030 in combination with other important measures, such as the extension of the Emissions Trading System, the introduction of a Carbon Border Tax and a Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. In order to better reflect the importance of the common fisheries policy, at our request, the term Fisheries was added to the title of Environment and Oceans portfolio.

Driven by our ambition to fight austerity and to be the front-runners of the Agenda 2030, we have put forward an ambitious strategy to implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals through a revision of the current European Semester. After years of our Group fighting for it, this major breakthrough will finally ensure that key economic, social and ecological targets have the same importance in the policy process. This is how we can deliver change and how we will have the necessary governance to turn the European Green Deal into reality. Initially this task was under Mr Dombrovskis’ portfolio, however, due to our pressure, this crucial coordination of the SDGs will be in the hands of Paolo Gentiloni.

We will be able to guarantee more green and sustainable funding through a Sustainable Europe Investment Plan, including turning parts of the European Investment Bank into a climate bank. We now have to continue fighting to ensure adequate financing for these proposals. We defend that no one and no region can be left behind during this process of transition. For that purpose, we managed to secure a Just Transition Fund. This is a necessary tool to include the social dimension into the ecological transition, and it will be designed and implemented by our commissioner Elisa Ferreira.

Economic and Social Europe

We influenced the Commission in prioritising the deepening of the Economic and Monetary Union towards a more sustainable and growth friendly paradigm. This goal is accompanied with several proposals that we have been calling for many years, such as the use of full flexibility within the Stability and Growth Pact and a Budgetary Instrument for Convergence and Competitiveness. On top of these already existent tools, the new Commission commits to present more risk sharing and solidarity instruments to better equip the Euro Area. This is the case of one of our key policy proposals such as the European Unemployment Benefit Reinsurance Scheme and the completion of the Banking Union with a common backstop to the Single Resolution Fund and a European Deposit Insurance Scheme. We also secured clear commitments for fairer taxation, with the prioritisation of taxing big tech companies and of a common consolidated corporate tax base.

We have secured an action plan for the full implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. This remarkable responsibility will be under Nicolas Schmit - who, as a result of pressure from our side, will not only be the commissioner for jobs but also for social rights!
Turning the Social Pillar into a reality has always been a top S&D priority, and it will now include a legal instrument for a minimum wage that will allow for decent living, the setting up of a European Child Guarantee - a key pledge in the PES 2019 Manifesto, a proposal for improving labour conditions of platform workers and a revision of the anti-discrimination directive. One of our most renowned policies, the Youth Guarantee, will be institutionalised as a permanent instrument to fight youth unemployment.

Being coherent with our principles, we demanded that equality is at the heart of the work of the new Commission. The important role of gender mainstreaming in all proposals will be under the competences of Helena Dalli. This commitment will also be translated into a real EU gender equality strategy that will include, amongst other proposals, binding pay transparency. We have a commitment to unblock the Women on Boards Directive, to add violence against women on the list of EU crimes defined in the Treaty, and to adopt additional concrete legal measures to fight gender-based violence.

Justice

After a heated dispute and a lot of noise in the European and national media, we changed the title of Mr. Schinas’ portfolio from “protecting” to “promoting our European way of life”. This is not a minor detail, it reflects a shift in approach: the priorities under this portfolio shifted from one focusing on security and defence, to a more positive and inclusive approach focusing on the respect of the rule of law and on a more humane way of dealing with migration and refugee flows. This will be translated into a comprehensive European Rule of Law Mechanism (with an empowerment of the role of the EP and linked to the MFF) and a New Pact on Migration and Asylum, which will include the Dublin reform. Our comrade Ylva Johansson will have a key role in developing this New Pact on Migration and Asylum and the relevant security issues will be under her portfolio.

Our Group also obtained further commitments from the Commission during the hearings, for example facilitating access to justice through a possible extension of the collective redress instrument to all citizens, not only consumers, in particular in the field of environmental rights protection. Following an S&D call that voluntary measures are not enough and in view of achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, the commissioner-designate for justice also committed to put forward several initiatives on corporate sustainability and due diligence; a revision on the non-financial reporting Directive to increase transparency in the corporate sector, but also other legislative measures to promote corporate sustainability in order to ensure that all EU companies, including their supply chains, comply with human rights and environmental protection.

A valued based foreign policy

In line with our fundamental values, we secured that during the next legislative term every new trade agreement will dedicate a chapter to sustainable development and provisional application of trade agreements takes place only once the EP has given its consent. This important task and the setting up of a comprehensive strategy on Africa will be in the hands of Jutta Urpilainen. We also guaranteed the support of the new Commission to reaffirm the European perspective of the Western Balkans and to put additional efforts to open negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia. Overall, our political family will have Josep
Borrell as the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy and Security Policy/Vice-President designate of the European Commission. He will commit himself to a strong, credible and value-based foreign policy in a very complex global context.

**Democracy**

In order to deliver the necessary institutional changes demanded by EU citizens, we asked for the launch by 2020 of a “Conference on the Future of Europe”, which should work to strengthen EU democracy, as the best tool to fight populists and extremists. We asked for the right of initiative for the European Parliament and the improvement of the lead candidate system. Not only did we manage to secure these commitments but also we will have Maroš Šefčovič in the steering position of all these processes aimed at bringing Europe closer to its citizens.

Thanks to your support and to the good coordination between the S&D Bureau, the coordinators, the PES and our commissioners-designate, we have been able to maximise our leverage and secure all these important commitments. The new Commission, as it stands, has the indelible stamp of our Group. With our affirmative vote next week, let us make sure that our Group will continue to be the indispensable force that will make the next Commission succeed.

Best wishes,

Iratxe García-Pérez