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Prevention and disclosure of conflicts of interests in the Pompidou Group

Written question No. 662 to the Committee of Ministers

by Mr Jim DOBBIN, United Kingdom, Socialist Group

The Pompidou Group (PG) was incorporated into the institutional framework of the Council of Europe as an Enlarged Partial Agreement in 1980. Its core mission is to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking in drugs, and for that, the PG contributes to the development of effective and evidence-based drug policies in its member States.

Its Permanent Correspondents (PCs) constitute the main decision-making body of the PG. They are official representatives of their government, appointed by these governments. So they are civil servants. Ad hoc expert groups serve as task forces in the PG's activities that provide multi-disciplinary expertise on specific questions and topics. PCs nominate experts and facilitate their participation in expert ad hoc expert groups and professional networks.

Having in mind Recommendation 1908 (2010) (European Code of good conduct on lobbying) and other regulation instruments regarding conflicts of interests, and the numerous recent scandals involving experts of national or international committees that were for example tied with pharmaceutical industry in several countries of Europe, it struck me that I could not find any rule set up to prevent conflict of interest in the PG, whether it concerned PCs or the experts that they nominate for the ad hoc groups, neither any place to find out any disclosure of conflict of interest by the PCs or the experts nominated by them to constitute ad hoc groups, which undermines the confidence one can have in such institution.

Mr Jim Dobbin,

To ask the Committee of Ministers,

What are the exact rules to prevent conflicts of interests, revolving doors or corruption in a spirit of full transparency, applied to the Pompidou Group as far as the PCs and the experts nominated are concerned?

