



The President

Nigel Farage, MEP,  
Co-Chair,  
EFD Group,  
European Parliament

303328 02.03.2010

Dear Mr Farage, *Dear Colleague,*

Following our meeting earlier today, I am writing to you in the context of your remarks in the plenary of the European Parliament on Wednesday 24 February, during the report-back by Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, on the outcome of the informal summit meeting held in Brussels on Thursday 11 February.

I attach the highest importance to freedom of speech. I fought for decades in my own country for such freedom. I have complete respect for your right to express the views you may hold on the policies and institutions of the European Union. However, as I explained to you today and on previous occasions, it is not possible to exercise the freedom which we all hold dear without respecting the dignity of others and of the institution in which we both sit. I do not believe that freedom of speech in the Parliament can extend to insulting other persons, especially guests speaking, at our invitation, in the chamber.

I consider that, unfortunately, some of the comments which you made on 24 February were offensive both to Mr Van Rompuy personally and to the member state from which he comes. Such behaviour is, in my view, inappropriate and disrespectful to the dignity of the Parliament. The very foundation of parliamentarism and democracy is that freedom of expression should respect others.

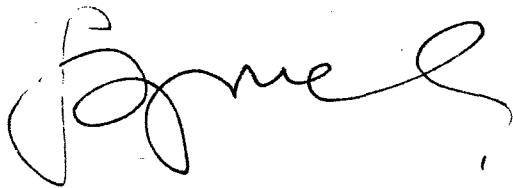
When we met, I invited you to withdraw your comments and to apologise to Mr Van Rompuy personally, to the Belgian people and to our parliamentary colleagues for any offence which such comments may have caused. You made it clear that you were not willing to do so.

I have to say that I am very disappointed by your behaviour, not least because this is not the first occasion on which we have had to meet or talk over the telephone in order to discuss your conduct in the chamber.

In accordance with Rule 153(3), I therefore regret to inform you that I have decided to impose the following penalty on you in relation to the incident in question, which transgresses Rule 9(2) of our Rules of Procedure: forfeiture of your entitlement to the daily subsistence allowance for Members for a period of ten days.

You have the right, if you wish, to appeal against this penalty to the Bureau of the Parliament within two weeks of this letter.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jerzy Buzek', written in a cursive style.

**Jerzy Buzek**