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Transparency International EU and The Good Lobby to launch European Ombudsman complaint over European Parliament top jobs fiasco

Michiel van Hulten · Tuesday, September 13th, 2022

Anti-corruption NGO Transparency International EU (TI EU) and participatory democracy start-up The Good Lobby today announced they will be launching a formal complaint to the European Ombudsman over the European Parliament's late-night decision yesterday to rush through a package of top job appointments, including the post of Secretary-General and several Directors-General.

Before the summer it emerged that a secret backroom deal had been done between a number of EP political groups to secure the appointment of the EPP's Alessandro Chiocchetti, Head of President Metsola's private office, as the new Secretary-General of the European Parliament. In return, the other political groups allegedly agreed be rewarded with appointments of their own.

TI EU spoke out against this proposed deal at the time, calling it a case of institutional corruption, and called for the process the halted and restarted in a transparent and accountable manner. Last week TI EU also wrote a letter to this effect to the Parliament's ruling body.

The European Parliament itself has previously attacked the European Commission over the way it fast-tracked the appointment of Juncker Head of Cabinet Martin Selmayr as Commission Secretary-General. That process was found by the European Ombudsman to have been deeply flawed.

TI EU Director Michiel van Hulten said: "The way this package of top jobs was adopted in the dead of night without any form of internal or public scrutiny is completely unacceptable. EU citizens expect the EU institutions to be transparent and accountable, instead of stitching up sordid backroom deals to further the personal and political agendas of senior officials, MEPs and party groups. We believe that the way this process has been conducted constitutes a prima facie case of maladministration. We will work with The Good Lobby, which has extensive legal expertise in this area, to put together a formal complaint to the EU Ombudsman."

Alberto Alemanno, Founder and Director of The Good Lobby said: "Back room deals such as the nomination of the least qualified candidate to lead the European Parliament's administration urgently call for greater public and political accountability of European political parties and leaders. Our complaint attempts at filling up this gap".

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