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**President:**  
Joe Hansen  
UFCW, USA and Canada

**General Secretary:**  
Philip J. Jennings

Mr Vladimir Špidla  
EU Commissioner  
Employment, Social Affairs &  
Equal Opportunities  
European Commission  
200, rue de La Loi  
B – 1040 Brussels

Nyon, 7 April 2008

Dear Commissioner Spidla,

We have read in the press that EU Commissioner McCreevy is against the minimum wage in the postal sector because it apparently stands in the way of competition.

We should like to point out that the European Parliament has made the further opening up of the postal market a core issue, and has highlighted the dangers associated with it. Furthermore, the EP demanded that social issues be given much greater focus in the future postal services directives than was the case in the original Commission draft.

In the amendment to the new postal services directive adopted by the European Parliament, Member States are given a number of possibilities to back up the opening of their letter markets with social flanking measures. National governments would be entitled to impose social conditions for the award of a license or to adopt an industry-wide minimum wage. The draft text of the directive proposed by the EP also requires Member States to ensure the strict application of labour regulations to all providers of postal services. It also makes it clear that the competence of Member States under social and labour legislation should not be affected by the postal services directive.

Moreover, the Portuguese Presidency presented to the Council of Ministers a compromise proposal in which it is stated that the fact that the directive has no impact on the competence of Member States to regulate labour conditions in the postal sector should not lead to a situation of unfair competition. Social considerations are to be given higher priority in the run-up to any further market opening.

Some Member States have already adopted legal or contractual instruments to prevent wage dumping in general, and price undercutting in particular, in the letter post sector. Based on our experience regarding trends in employment conditions in a competitive market, and the possibilities given to Member States under the new version of the postal services directive to prevent wage dumping, a number of trade unions affiliated to UNI are demanding that their governments implement the appropriate measures to prevent, or at least attenuate, the negative effects on employment conditions resulting from full market liberalisation. Such instruments also include a minimum wage for the postal sector. We are surprised that EU Commissioners are now trying to reverse a decision of the European Parliament.

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We call upon you as Commissioner for Social Affairs to plead our case in the Commission and to prevent any undermining of the regulations that were democratically approved by the European Parliament and which call for a greater focus on the social dimension of market liberalisation in the interests of Europe's 2 million postal workers. It would be appropriate for the Commissioner for Social Affairs to publicly state that he supports this approach.

Yours sincerely,



Neil Anderson  
Head of Department  
UNI Post & Logistics Global Union



Rolf Büttner  
President  
UNI Post & Logistics World Committee

