

socialplatform

To:

Ms Nyamko Sabuni, Minister for Integration and Gender Equality

Ms Cecilia Malmström, Minister for EU Affairs

Mr Göran Hägglund, Minister for Health and Social Affairs

May 28, 2009

Dear Ministers,

Re: Social Platform expectations for the Equality Summit

The third Equality Summit will take place under your presidency in Stockholm on November 16-17. It shall be the place for dialogue between Member States and civil society, as stated in the Commission's communication of July 2008: "Non discrimination and equal opportunities: a renewed commitment".

Social Platform is the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe. Consisting of 42 pan-European networks of NGOs, Social Platform campaigns to ensure that EU policies are developed in partnership with the people they affect, respecting fundamental rights, promoting solidarity and improving lives. It includes the five European NGO networks* working specifically on anti-discrimination and the European Women's Lobby.

For this Equality Summit, Social Platform has the following expectations:

- **A dialogue on the new anti-discrimination directive covering the grounds of age, disability, religion and sexual orientation outside employment.** We believe that the Swedish presidency should report content wise on the progress made towards the adoption of the directive, the difficulties faced, and the issues at stake. We would be then able to provide you with our expertise, responses and proposals. Social Platform has always been calling for the same protection for all grounds of discrimination as in the Race Equality directive.
- **A dialogue with all Member States.** We call on you to invite all the Ministers for equal opportunities from the 27 EU Member States are invited. This would increase their ownership of the summit as well as its visibility towards people in the EU. A session of at least 45 minutes should be provided for questions and answers between Ministers and participants.

- **A real partnership with civil society for the organisation of the summit.** Based on the legacy of "2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All", we wish to be directly involved during this summer in the organisation of the summit. For the Lisbon Summit of November 2007 and the Paris Summit 2008, we were involved in discussion on the objectives of the event, the agenda, the speakers as well as the workshops. This participation from the beginning led to a fruitful event.

We hope we can count on your support in building an ambitious Equality Summit.

Yours Sincerely,



Conny Reuter
President



Roshan Di Puppo
Director

*European Network Against Racism (ENAR), the European Disability Forum (EDF), the European Youth Forum (YFJ), the European Older People's Platform (AGE) and the European Region of the International Gay and Lesbian Association (ILGA Europe).

CC: - Commissioner Vladimír Špidla, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
- Nikolaus van der Pas, Director-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities