



Fabio De Masi, Member of European Parliament
DIE LINKE – Gauche Unitaire Européenne/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL)

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (Member) | Committee on Transport and Tourism (Substitute)
EU-South Africa Interparliamentary Delegation (Member) | EU-India Interparliamentary Delegation (Substitute)

MEP Roberto Gualtieri
(Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs / ECON)

MEP Claude Moraes
(Chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs /LIBE)

Coordinators of political groups in ECON and LIBE

Dear Honourable Chairs,
Dear esteemed Members of Parliament,

Bruxelles, 06.11.2014

The NSA scandal and the witness accounts of the former CIA-employee and whistle-blower, Edward Snowden, raised public awareness on the threat of secret services to democracy. Snowden has been rightfully awarded the alternative Nobel-Prize for his courage to speak the truth to power.

The US telecommunication giant Verizon closely collaborates with the US National Security Agency (NSA). The US Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court required Verizon to provide information on phone calls (metadata) within the US and between the US and abroad on an "ongoing, daily basis". Even phone calls by US President Barack Obama have been affected.

Snowden has provided reliable and accurate accounts of secret service conduct. Snowden is convinced that Verizon is heavily involved in economic espionage. Hence, the German government and the German Parliament (Deutsche Bundestag) have recently terminated contracts with Verizon.

However, as revealed in a letter by President of the European Central Bank (ECB), Mario Draghi, to MEP Fabio De Masi, (GUE/NGL, Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs), the ECB has no intention to terminate contracts with Verizon. We attach the letter for your consideration.

Verizon services the IT-Infrastructure and business continuity services (i.e. the emergency management during computer shutdowns) of ECB. Recently, ECB has been exposed to a successful cyber-attack including the capture of e-mail communication which is managed by Verizon.

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We cannot accept that elected representatives of the European Parliament gain access to information on issues such as the so-called Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) or the Banking Stress Tests in special reading rooms only and are not allowed to reveal information to citizens. Meanwhile, the ECB has an uncomfortable lax conduct towards risks of economic espionage.

We - members and substitutes in ECON and LIBE - kindly ask the chairs of those committees, Mr Gualtieri and Mr Moraes, to demand exact information from the ECB (such as an in-depth documentation of the evaluation of ECB security infrastructure which Mr Draghi referred to in his letter) for further inspection by Members of European Parliament. We are happy to motivate our initiative in an informal exchange of views with the political group coordinators in ECON and LIBE in a subsequent coordinators meeting. We would also welcome a joint statement by ECON and LIBE members urging the ECB to reconsider the procurement decision in favour of Verizon.

Sincerely,

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