



**Mr Jean-Claude Juncker**  
**President of the European Commission**

Brussels, May 2nd 2017,

Object: Export of live farm animals to third countries

Dear President,

The EU exports two million cattle and sheep a year to the Middle East, Turkey and North Africa. More and more evidence show that animals suffer greatly both during the long journeys and at slaughter.

This issue affects the portfolios of three of your Commissioners, Trade, Agriculture and Health, who appear, to some extent, not to pull into the same directions. This is time the Commission takes a clear stance to enforce its obligations on animal welfare.

Investigations by several NGOs have documented frequent and serious infringements of European Regulation 1/2005 protecting animal welfare during live animal transportation, both within the European Union (EU), and to third countries. The provisions of this regulation regarding animal welfare are often ignored and exceeding stocking densities, insufficient headroom for the animals to stand in a natural position, inadequate ventilation, very high temperatures, no access to water, food and rest are too frequently reported.

Furthermore, in the case of exports to the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey, EU animals are slaughtered in ways that involve immense suffering and breach the international standards on welfare at slaughter as defined by the OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health).

In 2015, the Court of Justice of the EU ruled in the *Zuchtvieh* case (C-424/13) that, in the case of the export of live animals to third countries, the requirements of Regulation 1/2005 also apply outside EU borders, until animals reach their final destinations. Yet, the exporting Member States and the Commission have made no serious attempt to respect the judgment of the Court of Justice and to try to ensure that exported EU animals are transported and slaughtered in accordance with OIE standards and with EU legislations.

The Commission's trade strategy "Trade for All" emphasises the need for the EU's trade to be responsible and consistent with European values. Article 13 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union recognises animals as "sentient beings" and requires the EU and Member States to "pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals". Therefore, exporting animals to be slaughtered in ways that involve great suffering is not consistent with European values and breaches the Treaty. Despite this, Agriculture and Trade Commissioners appear to support this cruel trade and welcome increases in live exports to the Middle East, Turkey and North Africa.

We believe these exports should be phased out and replaced with carcasses and meat products. In the meantime it should be carried out in a lawful manner, including by the reduction of transportation time of live animals to third countries. This position was already underlined in the report adopted in June 2016 by the European Parliament on the EU's trade strategy: "the need to regulate the export of living farm animals in compliance with the existing EU Law and the standards set down by the World Organisation for Animal Health".

We now urge the Commission to take steps to respond to this Parliament's resolution.

Yours sincerely,

**Signatories:**

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