

## Liberal group condemns Bulgarian government attacks on MEPs over commissioner hearings

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Guy Verhofstadt, ALDE group leader in the European Parliament reacted to Bulgarian PM Borisov's misplaced remarks in the Bulgarian media concerning his ALDE colleagues and their scrutiny of Bulgarian commissioner designate, Rumiana Jeleva.

"It is totally unacceptable for a Prime Minister to hit out with such sharp language at MEPs who are simply doing their job of scrutinising the candidates for the new EU executive. The European Parliament would be doing a disservice to those who elected them if we failed to take our responsibilities seriously.

"This hearing process is supposed to be a thorough and public examination of the competences and financial probity of the candidates. It is both the right and the duty of MEPs to raise any concerns now in order to clarify matters and clear up misunderstandings than brush them under the carpet and risk them creating difficulties at a later stage once the Commission is approved."

"I stand firmly by the ALDE Bulgarian delegation in raising genuine concerns. We are only interested in transparency and accountability and not in the game of conspiracy that Prime Minister Borisov is alleging."

Andrew Duff, (UK, Lib Dem) is Parliament's rapporteur on the overall hearing process and has followed every hearing closely.

"The criteria for approving the Commission are clear: competence, probity and communication skills. The European Council was supposed to put up candidates who could match these standards. Mr Barroso needs to ask himself whether in fact he has the top team he wants."

Charles Goerens (PD, Luxembourg) is ALDE coordinator in the development committee:

"The procedure we have followed in these hearings is correct and irreproachable. I am fully in line with the letter of recommendation sent by the committee to Presidents Buzek and Barroso in which we invite the latter to respond without delay to our assessment of Mrs Jeleva both in terms of competence and conformity with the commissioners code of conduct."