

CATHERINE ASHTON

HIGH REPRESENTATIVE

VICE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

MAROŠ ŠEFČOVIČ

INTER-INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

VICE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 21 OCT. 2013

A(2013)2583681-769215

Mr Maurizio Caldarone (NEAR)
Mr Georges Vlandas (RS-U4U-USHU)
Ms Helen Conefrey (RS-U4U-USHU)
Mr Cristiano Sebastiani (R&D)
Ms Giustina Sciarrabone (CONF-SFE)
Mr Pierre-Philippe Bacri (FPPE)

Dear colleagues,

Reference is made to your letters dated 25 June 2013 and 23 September 2013 entitled 'Social Security system for the Local Agents in Delegations'. The delay in sending this reply is sincerely regretted. The EEAS and the Commission value the important work which local agents contribute towards achieving the objectives pursued by its Delegations. They indeed constitute an essential category of staff.

A system of social security comprising a 'Provident Fund' and a 'Complementary Sickness Insurance' (CSISLA) was created in 1996; these schemes were set up in recognition of the fact that the local market employment conditions sometimes result in insufficient or non-existent social protection. These schemes provide complementary cover when the local system is considered insufficient or primary cover when the local system does not exist.

At the time of the creation of these two schemes, Article 14 of the Framework rules laying down the conditions of employment of local staff already called for their setting up, however, Article 121 of the Conditions of employment of other servants (CEOS) did not provide a sufficiently clear legal basis. This is the reason why Article 121 CEOS was amended in 2010 although, in fact, the schemes to implement this Article were already in existence at the time.

Article 121 CEOS requires the implementation of EU social security schemes only "where coverage by the local system either does not exist or is insufficient". The EU has so far applied these complementary schemes in as many as 134 out of a total of 141 delegations. It is therefore clear that the EU has already implemented Article 121 CEOS by ensuring a very wide coverage of the social rights of local agents in Delegations.

The time is right to engage in social dialogue on local agent issues in the forum of the EEAS Social Dialogue meetings held for this purpose, where further clarification on the implementation of Article 121 CEOS can be provided and broader issues relating to local agents in Delegations can be discussed.

Yours sincerely,



Catherine Ashton



Maroš Šefčovič