

Roberta Metsola

President of the European Parliament

25 June 2026, Brussels

Dear President Metsola,

We, the undersigned organisations, are writing to express our concern regarding the events that took place during the plenary session of 17 June 2026. Following the vote on the *Common system for the return of third-country nationals staying illegally in the Union (Return Regulation)*, a number of Members of the European Parliament applauded the outcome and chanted, “send them back”.

As the *Code of Conduct for Members of the European Parliament Regarding Integrity and Transparency* highlights in its Article 1(a), Guiding Principles: “Members of the European Parliament are guided by and observe the following general principles of conduct: disinterest, integrity, openness, diligence, honesty, accountability and respect for Parliament’s dignity and reputation”.

The European Parliament occupies a unique position as the directly elected institution representing the diversity of people living across the European Union. It is important that all plenary debates, committee meetings, as well as events in the EP are conducted in a manner that upholds the dignity of all people as set out in the EU Treaties and reflects the values and standards that the Parliament seeks to embody. Given that plenary and Committee proceedings are broadcasted and remain publicly accessible, expressions made in the chamber carry significance beyond the immediate political moment and help shape wider public discourse.

We are highly concerned, also because this is not an isolated occurrence. Since the beginning of this term, we have seen a clear increase in misogynist and sexist, LGBTI-phobic as well as racist and antisemitic hate speech. While Members have on occasion raised points of order in response to statements they consider discriminatory or inappropriate, there appears to be no clear guidance and uncertainty regarding how such situations should be addressed in real time, as well as followed up adequately.

We therefore call on you as President of the House, to make a public statement at the beginning of the next plenary to restore the respect of human rights and dignity in the plenary as well as remind all members of the rules of the house. We also would like to hear from you what measures you will take to ensure that those chairing plenary and committee proceedings are equipped with the guidance, confidence, institutional support as well as specific knowledge of the procedures necessary to respond consistently when such conduct takes place?

At a time of increasing political polarisation and heightened social tensions across Europe, it is particularly important that disagreements on policy are expressed in ways that preserve respect for the dignity, rights and humanity of all individuals. Public institutions play a crucial role in setting this standard.

Yours sincerely,

1. ACAT Belgique
2. ActionAid International
3. Action by Christians Against Torture-UK
4. Amnesty International
5. Asociación Por Ti Mujer
6. Avocats Sans Frontières Belgium

7. Bi+ Equal
8. CAN Europe
9. Caritas Europa
10. Center for Countering Digital Hate
11. Center for Reproductive Rights
12. CGT Opfra
13. CIDSE
14. CNCD-11.11.
15. COFACE Families Europe
16. CONCORD
17. EL*C - Eurocentralasian Lesbian* Community
18. End FGM European Network
19. ENSIE, the European Network of Work Integration Social Enterprises
20. ERGO Network
21. Eurodiaconia
22. EuroMed Rights
23. European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)
24. European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)
25. EASPD (European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities)
26. European Coalition for Corporate Justice
27. European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
28. European Disability Forum (EDF)
29. European Environmental Bureau
30. European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance
31. European Women's Lobby
32. Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice
33. European Network on Statelessness (ENS)
34. FEANTSA (the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless)
35. FIACAT (Federation Internationale des ACAT)
36. foodwatch International
37. Friends of the Earth Europe
38. Humanists International
39. IFSW Europe
40. IGLYO
41. ILGA-Europe
42. International Commission of Jurists
43. International Planned Parenthood Federation – European Network (IPPF EN)
44. International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)
45. Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Europe
46. Jesuit Refugee Service Malta
47. La Cimade
48. La Strada International
49. Médecins du Monde International Network
50. Missing Children Europe
51. Move Coalition
52. OII Europe
53. Oxfam
54. Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)

55. Protection International
56. Quaker Council for European Affairs
57. RED ACOGE
58. Save the Children Europe
59. Social Platform
60. Statewatch
61. Stichting LOS, Netherlands
62. TGEU
63. Transparency International EU
64. Utopia 56
65. VOICE
66. Volonteuroppe
67. Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) Network
68. World Organisation against Torture (OMCT)