

To the Chairman and
The Heads of Delegations
of the Administrative Council
of the European Patent Organisation

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Central Staff Committee
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Open letter: dismissal of a further staff representative

Dear Members of the Delegations of the Administrative Council,

The Central Staff Committee regrets to inform you that on 4th November 2016 the President of the EPO dismissed Laurent Prunier, an elected member of the Central Staff Committee and the Secretary of SUEPO The Hague.

The dismissal took place not only at a time when Laurent was on certified sick-leave, but also was applied with immediate effect although the Service Regulations (SR) do not allow that. SR Article 53(3) stipulates that dismissal *"shall take effect on the first day of the fifth month following the date on which it was notified to the employee concerned"*. Until then, the employee can remain suspended, but still receives a salary, is covered by social security provisions and continues to accrue pension rights.

Laurent was dismissed because he [allegedly](#) harassed a colleague, causing said staff member to resign from the CSC. As far as we know, no-one has resigned from the CSC for reasons of interpersonal problems within the CSC itself. If we had seen any activity amounting to harassment, we would not have tolerated it. Therefore, we are sceptical about the real motives behind the dismissal of yet another elected staff representative and union official.

We are saddened that the President has, once more, chosen to ignore the terms of [resolution CA/26/16](#) and the repeated demands by several Delegations of the Administrative Council to finally make every effort to restore a genuine social dialogue. We are also very concerned that four more staff representatives and/or union officials are (allegedly) going to

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be targeted soon with investigations that may lead to further disciplinary procedures.

At a time when the President pays lip service to “social dialogue” by organising “studies” and “conferences”, the EPO remains in a state of social turmoil and perceived lawlessness that risks compromising irremediably the reputation and continued existence of our Organisation.

We consider it is inescapable that the Administrative Council has to take action: this can no longer be delayed.

Yours sincerely,

The Central Staff Committee of the European Patent Office

We confirm that this letter was legitimately decided and produced by the Central Staff Committee¹.




~~Ion Brumme~~
(dismissed Jan 2016)



Alain Rosé
(threatened by PD43)



Malika Weaver
(downgraded Jan 2016)



Jesus Areso
(warned)

¹ Pursuant to Article 35(3) ServRegs, the Central Staff Committee shall consist of ten full and ten alternate members.

The CSC presently consists of 9 full and 6 alternate members, because two have resigned in December 2014, one has been dismissed in January 2016 (against the recommendation of the Disciplinary Committee), one resigned as of October 2016, one has been further dismissed in November 2016 and one refused replacement of a full member against Article 7(3) of Circular 355 since December 2014.

Furthermore, one member of a LSC has been dismissed and a further full member of the CSC has been downgraded in January 2016 (against the recommendation of the Disciplinary Committee). In fact, the Office has launched investigations and disciplinary procedures against several other Staff representatives as well, affecting negatively their health.

Alain Dumont

Laurent Prunier
(dismissed Nov 2016)

Jose Ramon Ambroa

Iordanes Thanos

Michael Kemény

François Brévier
(not allowed as the de jure
replacement for a full
member who resigned in
Dec 2014)

Thomas Franchitti
(working part-time
following sickness
since Sep 2015)

Philippe Couckuyt

Mathieu Guillaume

Michael Sampels



Joachim Michels
(warned)



Florent Béraud



Carmen Schuhmann

cc.: Mr B. Battistelli, President of the EPO
Council Secretariat