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*Dear Honourable Member,*

*Thank you for your letter of 6 November 2017 conveying an open letter from scholars, politicians, public intellectuals and Members of the European Parliament on upholding the rule of law in the European Union. I have considered it with great attention.*

*The European Union is founded on the values of democracy, the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights. The three need each other; one cannot be used to the detriment of the other.*

*On the issue raised in the letter, the position of the Commission remains as expressed by First Vice-President Timmermans in the European Parliament on 4 October. The Commission also called on all relevant players to now move very swiftly from confrontation to dialogue, as violence can never be an instrument in politics. The Commission trusts that the judicial system of Spain is acting independently and impartially, upholding the laws of Spain, including respect of fundamental rights and the right to a fair trial.*

*Yours faithfully,*

Ms Barbara SPINELLI, MEP  
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