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Ms. Génon K. Jensen
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Vienna, 2nd may 2018

Dear Ms. Jensen,

Thank you very much for your letter of 17 April 2018 on environmental health priorities addressed to Chancellor Sebastian Kurz. As the Director General responsible for EU matters at the Federal Chancellery and for the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union I may respond to your letter.

We believe that a safe and healthy environment is key for the security, well-being and future of all citizens of the European Union. In this sense I can assure you that Austria fully supports your call for a sustained EU leadership on climate matters. Our overarching priorities are combating climate change and promoting a circular economy, thus contributing to our health and well-being.

With a view to the Climate Change Conference (COP 24) in Katowice in December we aim at achieving a balanced and comprehensive package regarding the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Climate financing will also have to figure as an important element within this package. At the same time it is essential that finance

flows in general are consistent with a low carbon pathway. After the successful conclusion of the negotiations at EU level concerning the reform of the Emission Trading System, the Effort Sharing Regulation and LULUCF, we must keep the momentum and contribute to pursuing our ambitious goals also on a global level.

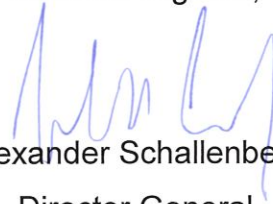
Furthermore we will continue the work undertaken by the Bulgarian Presidency for example on the standards for CO₂-emissions from cars and vans. On new proposals by the European Commission such as on standards for heavy duty vehicles or the new LIFE regulation the incoming Austrian Presidency stands ready to take up the work and to try to reach the best possible progress. This applies also to a possible proposal for single-use plastics. We support an ambitious plastics strategy and the inclusion of marine litter in the European Commission's strategy for plastics in a circular economy.

Besides preparing for the International Climate Conference in Poland we also need to prepare for the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 14) in Sharm el Sheikh in November. In addition to the informal meeting of Environment Ministers, which will take place jointly with Transport Ministers at the end of October in Styria, several topical events are planned during our Presidency such as the Water Conference and the Circular Economy Conference in Vienna.

The Austrian EU Presidency will do its best to bring all these important matters forward while being fully aware that the protection of our environment requires constant efforts and is by definition work in progress which cannot be addressed or solved by one country alone.

I hope to have been of some assistance and remain

with kind regards,



Alexander Schallenberg

Director General

Coordination