

D 308616 08.11.2024

Committee on Development
The Chair



EXPO-COM-DEVE D (2024)32442

CONFIDENTIAL

Bernd Lange
Chair, Conference of Committee Chairs
European Parliament

Subject: Evaluation of Jozef Síkela, designate for the post of Commissioner for International Partnerships

Dear Chair,

The Committee on Development in accordance with Rule 129 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, held a public confirmation hearing on Wednesday 6 November 2024 with Jozef Síkela, Commissioner-designate, who, subject to the positive outcome of the nomination procedure, will be responsible for the portfolio of International Partnerships.

On 16 October 2024 the Committee on Development, pursuant to Rule 129 of the Rules of Procedure and Article 3 of Annex VII thereto, received the letter from the Chair of the Committee on Legal Affairs regarding the scrutiny of the declaration of financial interests of Mr Jozef Síkela.

Prior to the confirmation hearing, Parliament had sent the Commissioner-designate a list of written questions. Our committee noted that Mr Síkela answered those questions in a satisfactory manner.

The course of the confirmation hearing is described in the verbatim transcript of the proceedings.

On the basis of the comments made by the coordinators of the Committee on Development, who met in camera after the confirmation hearing under my chairmanship, I hereby give the following assessment of Mr Síkela:

The Committee on Development is of the opinion that during the course of his hearing, the Commissioner-designate has shown commitment to the European project as a whole, and to international partnerships in particular. He has testified his ability to communicate priorities clearly and his personal qualifications make him a suitable candidate.

The Commissioner-designate committed to a number of issues, which are key to the DEVE Committee, and to the European Union's own development policy: to deliver results on the Global Gateway strategy, eradicate poverty, reduce inequality, promote sustainable development and achieve the SDGs. We in particular appreciate his commitment to better utilize the Inequality Marker and to maintain at least 13 % of development funding dedicated to education during the current MFF. He also committed to ensuring Policy Coherence for Development, addressing the root causes of irregular migration as well as to promoting gender equality. We welcome his engagement to advance mutually beneficial partnerships with Africa and with other regions, and to stay engaged and provide basic services in fragile contexts. We took note of his acknowledgement for Parliament to have a stronger role in the governance of Global Gateway and his engagement to better measure the impact of Global Gateway projects.

The Development Committee welcomes Mr Síkela's declared intention to have a regular and transparent dialogue with the Parliament, both in committee and plenary, and to ensure a flow of information with Parliament before major events and key stages of international negotiations. We underscore his commitment to continue the biannual High-Level Geopolitical Dialogue established under the NDICI-Global Europe. We also echo his commitment to be a staunch defender of the development aid budget and in particular not moving away from ODA.

Opinions of the committees invited to participate in the confirmation hearing are annexed to this letter.

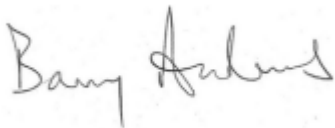
The general outcome of this confirmation hearing is that the Commissioner-designate gave a convincing impression of his aptitude to be a member of the College of Commissioners and to carry out the specific tasks assigned to him.

In accordance with Rule 129 of the Rules of Procedure and Article 5 of Annex VII thereto, the coordinators of the Committee on Development representing a majority of at least two-thirds of committee members belonging to a political group approved that the Commissioner-designate Jozef Síkela, is qualified both to be a member of the College of Commissioners and to carry out the specific tasks assigned to him.

During the evaluation meeting, the coordinator of the ESN group requested the inclusion of a minority opinion, which is in the annex.

I would be grateful if you could bring this assessment to the attention of the Conference of Presidents.

Yours sincerely,



Barry ANDREWS

Annex: Opinion of the Committee on Foreign Affairs
 Opinion of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
 Opinion of the Committee on International Trade
 Opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
 Minority opinion of Europe of Sovereign Nations Group

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr Barry Andrews
Chair,
Committee on Development

D 308542 07.11.2024

Subject: Evaluation of Jozef Sikela, Commissioner-designate for international partnerships

Dear Mr Andrews,

The Committee on Foreign Affairs, invited to the confirmation hearing of Commissioner-designate Jozef Sikela, which took place on 6 November 2024, considers that the Commissioner-designate is qualified to be member of the College and is qualified to carry out the particular duties he has been assigned in the field of building comprehensive and mutual partnerships with an integrated approach, supporting the Vice-President / High Representative in reforming the international system (United Nations and multilateral bodies), strengthening the Global Gateway strategy and continuing building on the Team Europe approach.

This opinion has been adopted by Coordinators representing at least a simple majority of committee members belonging to a political group.

Yours sincerely,



David McAllister

IPOL-COM-FEMM D(2024)32676

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressee

D 308562 07.11.2024

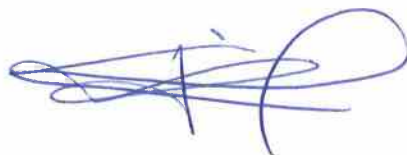
Barry Andrews, Chair of the Committee on Development

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, invited to the confirmation hearing of Commissioner-designate for International Partnerships Jozef Síkela, which took place on 6 November 2024, considers that the Commissioner-designate is **qualified** to be member of the College and is **qualified** to carry out the particular duties he has been assigned in the field of promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through EU international partnerships.

In particular, we appreciated the commitment to implement GAP III and support GAP IV.

Additionally, we would like to stress the commitment of the Commissioner-designate, as in the reply to the written question on the importance of the access to sexual and reproductive health and rights and to the support of the human rights defenders.

This opinion has been adopted by Coordinators representing at least a simple majority of committee members belonging to a political group.



Lina Gálvez

Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality



Committee on International Trade
The Chair

CONFIDENTIAL

D 308551 07.11.2024

Mr Barry ANDREWS
Chair
Committee on Development

Dear Chairman,

The Committee on International Trade, invited to the confirmation hearing of Commissioner-designate Jozef Síkela, which took place on 6 November 2024, considers that the Commissioner-designate is qualified to be member of the College and is qualified to carry out the particular duties he has been assigned in the field of international trade.

Trade and sustainable economic development are closely connected. INTA Coordinators welcomed a number of written and oral commitments made by Commissioner-designate Síkela that fall in the remit of the competences of the INTA Committee notably with regard to advancing mutually beneficial trade relations with development partner countries.

This opinion has been adopted by INTA Coordinators by a large majority of committee members belonging to a political group.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernd Lange". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mr Bernd LANGE
Chair
Committee on International Trade

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
The Chairman

IPOL-COM-LIBE D (2024) 33183

CONFIDENTIAL

Barry ANDREWS
Chair of the Committee on Development

D 308603 07.11.2024

Subject: LIBE Committee opinion on the Confirmation Hearing of Jozef SÍKELA

Dear Mr ANDREWS,

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs was invited to the confirmation hearing of the Commissioner-designate for International Partnerships, Jozef SÍKELA, which took place on Wednesday 6 November 2024.

Following his replies to LIBE-related questions, the Committee considers that the Commissioner-designate is qualified to be a member of the College and is qualified to carry out the particular duties he has been assigned in the LIBE Committee's remit.

This opinion has been adopted by Coordinators representing a majority of committee members belonging to a political group.

Yours sincerely,



Javier ZARZALEJOS, Chair of the LIBE Committee

cc:

Bernd LANGE, Conference of Committee Chairs
Committee Coordination and Legislative Programming Unit (Coordleg)

Minority Opinion ESN - Jozef Sikela - 06.11.2024

At the hearing of the Development Committee, Jozef Sikela gave detailed answers to the MEPs' questions. His political experience and economic expertise were evident. However, his positions on the fight against illegal migration were not consistent enough, nor did he show any distance from the EU's ideological goals such as climate policy and gender mainstreaming.

The ESN is therefore unable to support the candidate Jozef Sikela.