

Dr Werner Langen  
Chair of the PANA Committee  
254  
Europe House  
St. Paul Street  
Valletta

20<sup>th</sup> February 2017

Dear Dr Werner Langen ,

Reference is made to your letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

I have taken note of your invitation to appear before the PANA Committee during its visit here in Malta and, after due consideration, I would like to inform you that I shall be declining your invitation.

First and foremost, I am not an elected official. I hold a position of trust in service of the Maltese Government, and shall so serve while I enjoy such confidence.

As noted by the opinion released by the Legal Service to the Council of the European Union, it is uncertain whether the Committee enjoys a mandate and has sound legal standing to carry out its inquiry. That being said, and without prejudice thereto, looking at the terms of reference of the Committee tasked to inquire about the adoption and implementation of anti-money laundering and taxation Union law, I fail to identify the reason for the personalisation of the Committee's work. To my knowledge, this was not the approach that the Committee took in its visit to the United Kingdom last week, and I suspect it does not serve the Committee to treat equal partners differently. Such attitude seems to be driven by reasons extraneous to the scope of inquiry and therefore I feel that my attendance would set a dangerous precedent.

I have always respected honest and fair public scrutiny, answering any questions posed to me on the matter. You may note that I also released a public statement, published in all local mainstream media, and which I am here attaching for your information. Moreover, in the spirit of open disclosure, I have today published the consolidated audited accounts of my trust and the company settled into same.

However, it is evident that there are those who are driven by insincere motivation and who do not truly care for the discussion driving the Committee, but who will stop at nothing, contriving lies and falsehoods for the sole purpose of harming this Government and the progress of this country. Clearly it is pertinent to note that the ICIJ did not feel it relevant to the scope of its investigative journalistic work to mention me in the release of its data.

I find it most peculiar that the Committee would champion the cause of a person driven solely by hate, to the extent of wishing my early demise (as the attached report attests - <https://daphnecaruanagalizia.com/2016/12/keith-schembri-terminal-cancer-wrong-end-stick/> ), and who should be herself subject to scrutiny by this Committee for alleged tax-based indiscretions.

Surely this is not the kind of public discourse that is required to maintain a healthy democracy. Europe today suffers the effects that the legitimization of such politics brings about.

This same vitriol has been espoused by the leader of the Opposition who, for lack of a genuine platform, has resorted to jumping on the bandwagon at every opportunity, spinning and manufacturing lies with regards to any and every exponent of the Labour movement in Malta.

In light of this, I feel my attendance would be used by people so intentioned to cause harm and disrepute to my country which, for all its limitations, is a true and confident member of the Union.

I am certain that, under your direction as Chairperson, the Committee will perform its duties and reach its conclusion in a dispassionate and just manner in full respect of the principles of sincere cooperation and subsidiarity.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Schembri