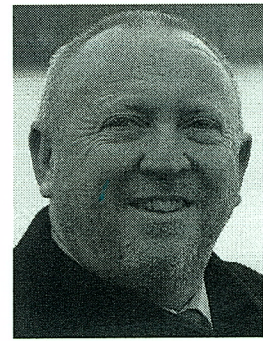




KEITH TAYLOR
Green Party
for the South East of England



Member of the European Parliament

Johannes Hahn
Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy
and Enlargement Negotiations
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels

19th February 2015

Dear Commissioner Hahn,

I'm writing in my capacity as a Vice-President of the European Parliament's Intergroup on Animal Welfare on behalf of several of my constituents, who have brought to my attention the appalling treatment of stray animals in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I know many of my colleagues in the European Parliament have previously raised this issue, and while I understand that the management of stray animals is not an EU competence and therefore remains the remit of the national governments, in this instance I am writing to raise the issue of the national government's failure to enforce the rule of law.

Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina both have comprehensive animal welfare laws, however, by the Commission's own admission, "there is legislation in place (Law on Animal Welfare), but this is not fully implemented"¹. This fact is corroborated by reports of animal cruelty, particularly in shelters for stray dogs, from NGOs working in these countries as well as being extensively reported in the European press.

As these countries are current and potential candidates for EU accession, I am concerned that neither Serbia nor Bosnia and Herzegovina are upholding the fundamental EU principle of the rule of law, a condition of membership of the European Union.

In addition, as accession countries are required to fully implement EU laws into their national law as a requirement of EU membership, I would like to highlight that Article 13 of the TFEU requires Member States to respect the welfare requirements of animals.

I would urge you, as the Commissioner for EU Enlargement, to ensure that both Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are fastidious in implementing and enforcing their national animal welfare laws as a prerequisite to their accession. As this is a matter of great importance and compassion by many of my constituents, I would like to ask what steps the Commission is taking to ensure that all animals in these countries are offered the high level of protection and welfare standards that EU citizens expect.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Taylor - Green Party MEP, South East England.

¹<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-013965&language=EN>