

Statement by Commissioner Günther H. Oettinger on the Recommendation by the European Ombudsman of 4 September 2018 on the European Commission's appointment of a new Secretary-General

The European Commission has received the Recommendation by the Ombudsman on the appointment of the Secretary-General.

While we do not share all aspects of the underlying report, we welcome that the Ombudsman – based on a detailed analysis of some 11,000 pages provided to her – neither contests the legality of the appointment procedure of the Secretary-General, nor the choice of the candidate who is described as a *“competent EU official, highly committed to the European Union”*.

On some aspects, where the Commission has a different factual assessment, we will provide further information to the Ombudsman in due course.

When it comes to the Recommendation of how the Secretary-General should be appointed in the future, at first glance we do not see any reason why the appointment of the Secretary-General should be carried out independently from the appointment of any other Director-General.

Having said this, the Commission will look into the Ombudsman's Recommendation and looks forward to reassessing, together with the European Parliament and the other Institutions, how the application of the current rules and procedures can be improved in the future and applied in the same manner to all Institutions. I have convened an inter-institutional round table which will take place on 25 September 2018, and I hope that these discussions will allow us to guarantee the excellence and independence of the EU civil service, working for the benefit and in the common interest of our citizens.