



**Muzzle Loaders Associations
International Confederation**

Secretary General:
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Laudenbach, March, 6th 2017

Mrs. Vicky Ford

Chair of Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO)

Parlement Européen,

Bat. Willy Brandt 05M051,

60, Rue Wiertz,

B-1047 Bruxelles

Re.: **DIRECTIVE (EU) 2017/...OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of ...amending
Council Directive 91/477/EEC on control of the acquisition and possession of weapons**

Dear Mrs. Ford,

Please excuse our late arrival in this debate. Unfortunately, the fact that muzzle loading fire arms are affected by that directive has only been brought to our attention just now.

We, the MLAIC, as the world governing body of muzzle loader shooting, are not happy at all with this proposal, as this directive, when it comes into force, will impede our activities to promote the history of antique firearms, their formation process as well as their development. It is counterproductive for any kind of sports, collecting or re-enacting and destroys important national culture.

Your intention to reduce terrorism as well as criminal activities by the introduction of this directive is very much appreciated, however, can you specify how many acts of terrorism and/or crime have been carried out using muzzle loading firearms? The fact that the shot capacity of such firearms is around one shot per every two to three minutes sends a clear message! Such firearms are not suitable for either terrorism nor for any other kind of criminal activities!

The statement that reproductions of antique firearms do not have the same importance, that they might be produced using modern techniques and therefore be more dangerous than originals is also not true. Reproductions of antique firearms are used extensively during national and international championships. Important collections are based on reproductions and re-enactment is carried out mainly with reproductions of antique originals.

I, personally, have been shooting muzzle loading firearms for nearly forty years and I do not see any reason why a reproduction should be more dangerous than an original. They are, after all, close reproductions of the original firearm on which they are based. In fact, in many cases, the parts are interchangeable!

In other words: "If you built a horse-drawn carriage from the original drawings, using modern techniques and materials, it will remain a horse-drawn carriage and no amount of legislation will ever make it a Formula One Racing Car.

A muzzle loading firearm, by its very definition, can never become a semi-automatic or automatic weapon and will never be used for any of the illegal purposes mentioned in your directive.



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When introducing such directives which have to be converted into national law by the member countries of the EU, please be so kind and watch carefully what is proposed and what is passed on to the EU members.

I must say that from the very beginning, I have been a great advocate for the EU as I have always believed that such a big community will be to the benefit of all of us.

Unfortunately, meanwhile, there are so many decisions taken by the EU, which few of the EU population understand. It is not due a lack of intelligence that the people do not comprehend but due to decisions that seem to defy rational logic.

Finally, I would like to ask you to review part 13b of your proposal and reconsider its phraseology as the way it is currently laid out does not really seem to make sense.

If you would be so kind as to share this letter with the other members of your Committee, I would be most grateful.

For any further queries that might arise, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Hoping to having thrown some light on this sensitive issue,

I remain,

with best regards,

Gerhard Lang
Secretary General MLAIC