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Ulrike Scharf
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NC/cc Ares (2015) 583447

Dear State Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 3 February 2015 on the Commission's proposals on animal cloning replying to my letter of 7 January 2015. In my letter I had explained the reasons why the Commission did not propose measures on the progeny of clones.

In your letter you suggest that Union measures on cloning are necessary to prevent proliferation of animal cloning in third countries. In consequence regulation on the progeny of animal clones could be justified to safeguard animal welfare globally. You point out that negative effects on the animal product market due to loss in consumer confidence should be avoided and ask me to incorporate these considerations into future proceedings on the matter.

The idea of manipulating animals as if they were just objects creates resentment. This is reflected in Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union requiring that animals are treated as sentient beings. Yet as explained in my above-mentioned letter progeny of clones does not suffer from the use of the technique. The impact assessment on cloning indicated that measures on progeny were complicated and costly. Distress that ancestry of the progeny may have suffered is too remote to justify measures of significant impact. For this reason the Commission decided not to impose requirements on progeny.

I agree that negative effects on the animal product market due to loss in consumer confidence should be avoided. In this context I would like to point out that the Eurobarometer surveys showed that consumers have a negative perception of cloning due to ethical and animal welfare concerns, but are also confused with respect to the nature of the technique. For instance, they wrongly believe that it involves genetic modification or food safety concerns.

Yours sincerely,