

Ursula von der Leyen

President of the European Commission

Angela Merkel

Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

OPEN LETTER

Brussels, 14 September 2020

Dear President Ursula von der Leyen,

Dear Chancellor Angela Merkel,

Subject: Call for a coordinated European response

The COVID-19 pandemic constitutes an unprecedented challenge for the European Union and its Member States. A crisis like this requires strict measures to defend the health of the citizens and mitigate the damage on the economy, however, freedoms and rights must remain intact.

When societies entered into lockdown and our economies shutdown, the harm of the lack of coordination between member states was already visible. There were no coordinated criteria for counting cases, no coordinated traveling rules, no coordinated quarantine rules.

As the economies have re-started, European citizens have learned to be socially distanced and European businesses are reformulating to speed the recovery, the situation remains the same. Member States keep imposing unilateral rules that pose a restriction to individual freedoms.

Europe needs cross-country cooperation and common actions as never before. European citizens and businesses cannot afford anymore to be subject to arbitrary rules of quarantine or travel restrictions that vary from country to country.

We, European Liberals, urge the European Commission and the German Presidency of the European Council to take action and deliver now. Europe needs established uniform rules and harmonised actions.

The State of the Union presents a good opportunity to look back to what has been done but also to look forward and learn from the lessons. We believe that the role of the European Union is necessary to ensure the respect of our freedoms and welcome the recommendations launched by the European

Commission to protect the internal market and to restore freedom of movement and lifting internal border controls.

Nevertheless, this is not enough. A coordinated European response is needed. Europe and the European citizens need a coordinated approach on travel, a coordinated approach on comparable standards, a coordinated approach on privacy and data protection as well as a coordinated approach on tracing apps.

It is now time for the EU to deliver and find a harmonised approach. This is the moment where European citizens expect European leadership.

Yours sincerely,

Hans van Baalen

ALDE Party President