

By email to Heads of Delegation

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From:  
EPO-FLIER team  
epoflier@runbox.com

A shiny new building cannot gloss over serious governance deficits

Dear Heads and members of the Member States' delegations to the Administrative Council of the European Patent Organisation, dear Chairman, dear Mr Grandjean,

The climate in the EPO currently is such that staff members no longer dare to voice dissent, as chances are that the President - using his own yardstick - will interpret it as misconduct or as not being in the interest of the Office. Information and opinion forming have therefore partially gone underground. We, the EPO-FLIER team, currently need to remain anonymous due to freedom of speech being inhibited in the Office, which would not have been possible without your help.

We submit the most recent EPO-FLIER to you. It has gone to a list of subscribers who help with the dissemination across the Office, by making them available in directorate coffee-rooms and departmental notice-boards. This FLIER No. 8, 'Balancing views' wants to provide a more complete picture than the President will have given to you or has portrayed to media. The annex is written in German. You might consider requesting a translation from the Office.

It is a pity that on the day where we celebrate the laying of the first stone for one of the most impressive office buildings in the Netherlands, we also have to bemoan the departure from fundamental rights standards which we would enjoy as citizens in any of our countries, that we have to worry whether the climate in the Office may have been a contributing factor to another colleague's death under suspicious circumstances.

Our legal system currently is so slow that it cannot present a meaningful corrective for Mr Battistelli's - and your - actions. Europe's leaders appear less interested than interested circles, media and civil society. All of these will be looking at the outcome of your June-meeting in The Hague. Not only 'New Main' will be a landmark in the history of the EPO. Your decision on the presidency of the Office for the period after expiry of Mr Battistelli's term will be remembered.

As you are writing history, please make sure it will be remembered as a moment of inspired leadership, allowing the Office to return to being a place where motivated staff enjoys contributing to the success of Europe.

We wish you a lot of wisdom in the next couple of days.

With our best regards,

The EPO-FLIER team