



Molly Scott Cato
MEP for South West England and Gibraltar
European Parliament
Rue Wiertz
Brussels

23 September 2014

Dear Commissioner Almunia,

I represent South West England, the part of the UK that includes the site for the Hinkley nuclear power station. I write to you now, on behalf of my constituents, to raise some urgent questions about the decision to agree that the UK government can provide a huge subsidy to the power station.

I believe that the Commission rightly laid out a very clear legal view in its letter to the UK of 18 December 2013 regarding the Investment Contract and Credit Guarantee for Hinkley. At that stage it raised a number of serious concerns about the level of government money that was being provided and the nature of the contract. I was therefore shocked and disturbed to hear that these concerns have now been ignored. I would ask you urgently to provide a full account of how the decision was reached and how these concerns have been resolved to your satisfaction.

I also have a series of specific questions:

- Given that the deal which the Commission itself has valued at £17.6bn was not made generally available but was negotiated specifically for EDF and its financial backers, can the Commission justify its decision that the Hinkley deal does not involve state aid?
- In its consultation paper the Commission raised the concern that the Hinkley proposal did not meet the criteria for energy security (given that it would not produce any electricity until at least 2023); does it still hold to this view?
- On what basis has the Commission revised its earlier position that nuclear technology is a mature technology and therefore does not warrant any State Aid?
- Finally, in the interests of transparency will the Commission be making public the full evidence base for its judgement?

I stood on a pro-European platform in the recent elections and was called upon repeatedly to defend the European Union institutions against claims that they are distant, unaccountable and that decisions made behind closed doors ignore the provisions of the EU treaties for the sake of political expediency. It is vital that you dispel these suspicions amongst my constituents by responding urgently to these questions.

With best wishes,

Molly Scott Cato