TEXT:

In 2016 The President of the European Patent Office dismissed three elected staff representatives, all of them members of the staff union. Three other staff representatives were aggressively demoted in 2015 and 2016. Over the past four years five staff members of the EPO have committed suicide. Sheltering behind its immunity, the EPO has refused any independent enquiry by the local authorities concerned with regard to the circumstances of these deaths. While it is true that the Supreme Court of the Netherlands has recently upheld the immunity of the EPO, the findings of the Court of Appeal with regard to the violations of fundamental rights remain totally valid. If these events had occurred within European institutions, there can be no doubt that action would have been taken rapidly to determine where responsibility lay and to impose the appropriate penalties, but nothing of that kind has been done with the EPO.

The EU Commission has entrusted the EPO with producing the Unitary Patent. All of the twenty eight countries of the EU are represented on the Administrate Council of the EPO. The Commission has a seat as an observer, and can therefore make its voice heard. For more than three years, many members of parliament have also been condemning the highly "problematic" social situation at the EPO. Is it not high time that it made its views known, and takes up the position adopted by parliament with regard to the EPO?

What if the official position of the European Commission on these social abuses?

Is it in favour of an independent enquiry?