



SVERIGES UNGA AKADEMI



January 7th 2015

Dear President Jean-Claude Juncker,

The Young Academies of Sweden, Europe, Poland and Scotland wish to express our grave concerns regarding your recent decision to abolish the office of the *Chief Scientific Advisor (CSA) to the President of the European Commission*.

The establishment of the post of CSA by President Barroso in 2012 was an important step forward to augment the quality of the European Commission's decision-making process. The history of Europe testifies that consideration of scientific results and thinking plays a pivotal role in identifying threats and creating policies that improve people's lives - on our continent and beyond. Naturally, policy decisions and law can, or should, not be based solely on scientific considerations. We are, however, convinced that national and supra-national governing bodies serve current and future generations better when insights from scientific research contribute to the decision-making process in a transparent and formalized way. The office of the CSA was an important component in such a mechanism.

We are further concerned that disbanding the office of the CSA followed an intense campaign from interest groups whose opinions were disfavoured by scientific assessments. There will always be disagreement in science; such is the nature of inquiry into the unknown. To abolish the office of the CSA on the grounds of disagreement is, however, counterproductive. It also sets a dangerous precedent. Science should not be used only when it serves specific political agendas, and then ignored when it does not. Notably, this approach has been used by those who deny the human impact on climate change, despite overwhelming scientific evidence to the contrary. Open societies need to be courageous and allowed to benefit from scientific advice also when it challenges views held by strong interest groups.

It is essential that EU policy is informed by independent scientific advice and we urge you to reconsider your decision; the office of CSA, or a similar function, should be reinstated as soon as possible. We remain at your disposal if you wish to receive more detailed explanations of our concerns.

Sincerely,

The Young Academy of Sweden

The Young Academy of Europe

The Polish Young Academy

The Young Academy of Scotland