

**The German Presidency of the EU  
Mrs. Angela Merkel  
Raad van de Europese Unie  
Rue de la Loi  
175B-1048 Brussel**

Re: Animal welfare in European constitution

14<sup>th</sup> March 2007

Dear Chancellor Merkel,

The Coalition 'Save the Animal Welfare Act', which was established in 2006 to prevent the dissolution of the current Dutch animal welfare legislation, comprises the 21 most important Dutch animal welfare organisations. These organisations have a total of more than 800.000 members. Our animal welfare Coalition welcomes your initiative to draw up a Declaration, which will not only form the basis for a future European Constitution, but will also encompass a number of important ethical values in the European Union.

One of our Coalition's goals is to further respect for animals as sentient beings. In Europe, animal protection is an important ethical value for most citizens. Moreover, the issue has also received increasing attention from politicians in the EU in recent years.

'Animal welfare forms part of Europe's cultural heritage and the EU's ethical values' and is increasingly being included as an element in the "European model of society" (Draft opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on Animal Welfare – Labelling). The *Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2006-2010* is a result of this. It intends to introduce concrete measures to ensure and improve animal welfare.

It is crucial that the future constitution of the EU recognises animal protection as an essential ethical value in the European Union without any reservations. We would, therefore, ask you to refer to animals as being sentient beings in the Declaration and recognise animal protection as an important ethical value within the European Union.

We would like to thank you in advance for your attention and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,



Ton Dekker (chairman)  
COALITIE RED DE DIERENWELZIJSWET