The Sunday Telegraph has said I am the “best value for money” MEP. I remain ranked 15th among all 753 Members of the European Parliament in overall parliamentary activity, by www.mepranking.eu. So far during this parliamentary term I have made 461 Parliamentary speeches, far higher than the average contributions made by other MEPs in the UK. I received this rating because of “near-perfect attendance of 97.4%”, “moderate to low expenses” and for “bombarding” EU officials with questions about their responsibilities.

David Cameron has secured an historic victory over Europe by getting agreement to a cut in the EU budget for the first time ever. Spending will be reduced on the EU’s Multi-Annual Financial Framework over the next seven years from around €1trn to €908bn (£773bn). It is reported the move could save the British taxpayer up to £500m a year until 2020. The Prime Minister has also pledged to hold an in/out referendum on Europe if he wins the next general election, a strategy to lure back Eurosceptic voters. Sadly though, the deal will see a real terms cut in areas such as infrastructure projects and R&D investment which are the most useful parts of the EU budget, in order to safeguard the areas most in need of reform - namely the Common Agricultural Policy and structural funds. In addition, sources have intimated that the budget vote in the European Parliament may be conducted by secret ballot to stop governments pressuring their MEPs to back the deal. The ECR Group, of which I am proud to be a member, will support the Cameron deal and will also reject any request for a secret ballot vote. I believe the job of elected politicians is to be open, transparent and accountable in their democratic dealings, not least when deciding on spending taxpayers’ money.
Data Protection potential to harm medical research

A number of senior medical and social science researchers in my London constituency have expressed concerns about the potential impact of the proposed EU Data Protection Regulation (DPR) on restricting the availability of information to conduct vital medical and scientific research. It is believed that if the DPR is adopted as proposed, no identifiable individual data could be used without the individual’s prior consent unless considered of exceptionally high priority e.g. bioterrorism.

While it is reasonable to restrict access and regulate information stored about EU citizens as individuals there are legitimate medical and scientific research uses whose loss would have adverse effects on the welfare of individuals and society at large, particularly as EU health providers are now expected to base treatments on evidence of proven efficacy. This often requires use of mortality and cancer data; for instance in Scandinavian countries population registers are often used. It would become logistically impossible to undertake much of this research if researchers had to re-contact individuals every time they wanted to use the data. I have called on the Commission to confirm that these very serious academic research concerns have been fully assessed prior to proposing this legislation and asked if existing arrangements, such as in the UK and Sweden, can be allowed to continue if and once the DPR comes into force. If not, then the Commission should withdraw its entire proposal in order to safeguard clinical and scientific research in the EU.

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Top Tannock speeches this month

Charles on: assisting SMEs in London http://goo.gl/DvnKY
Charles on: violence against women and children around the world http://goo.gl/liUtz
Charles on: Thatcherite medicine needed for the EU’s ailments http://goo.gl/TNpbZ
Charles on: my report on EU strategy for the Horn of Africa http://goo.gl/PRF35

A selection of my speeches can also be viewed on YouTube at http://goo.gl/PRF35
and the text of my speeches can be accessed on my website. You can also find me on Facebook

With Howard Feldman, Vice-President Network Operations of Inmarsat, at its London HQ witnessing a demonstration of the BGAN portable satellite terminal’s ability to download my webpage from the internet by direct link from a London building to a geostationary satellite covering Europe and the Middle East. I am keen to support London business.

Addressing a group of visitors from my London constituency, regarding the role of an MEP and in particular my involvement in the Foreign Affairs and Human Rights committees as Conservative spokesman.

With His Holiness Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, supreme spiritual leader of the worldwide Ahmadiyyah Muslim community on his visit to the European Parliament.

During the Berrylands byelection in Kingston, with GLA Member Tony Arbour, Council Leader Councillor Howard Jones, and many other local councillors and activists.

Conservatives in the European Parliament

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