

**Question for written answer E-009451/2014**  
**to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**  
Rule 130  
**Charles Tannock (ECR)**

Subject: VP/HR - EU sanctions against the Russian Federation and associated reports

The Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Russian Duma, Aleksey Pushkov, recently visited Finland, meeting his counterpart at the Finnish Parliament, the Speaker of the Parliament, as well as other high-profile party leaders.

Following the visit, Mr Pushkov was quoted in Russian state media as saying that 'the Finnish political class and business structures would be interested in defusing tensions and the start of revision of the economic sanctions'. There were further suggestions in news articles that other Member States share this view.

Such news is concerning, given the recent reports of heavy shelling in eastern Ukraine and the movement of heavy weapons, tanks and troops into separatist-held areas from across the Russian border.

1. What is the Vice President / High Representative's assessment of these reports, and is there any substance to claims that some Member State governments wish to ease sanctions against the Russian Federation?
2. Were further sectorial sanctions against the Russian Federation discussed at the Foreign Affairs Council meeting of 17 November 2014?
3. What is the Vice President / High Representative's assessment of the gathering of military hardware into separatist-held areas of Ukraine, and does she interpret this as preparation for a Mariupol offensive?