Question for written answer E-006577/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Patrizia Toia (S&D), Flavio Zanonato (S&D) and Renato Soru (S&D)

Subject: The future of metallurgical industries and energy prices

At the end of 2012, ALCOA Trasformazioni Srl, the Italian arm of US-based aluminium producer ALCOA, ceased all operations at its Portovesme smelter on the island of Sardinia, after three rulings from the European Court of Justice pronounced preferential electricity tariffs previously granted to the company to be incompatible with State aid guidelines. Procedures have since begun to permanently shut down the plant.

A potential buyer, the Anglo-Swiss Glencore group, will negotiate an agreement only if sustainable electricity costs can be guaranteed.

In addition, following the ad hoc meeting between representatives from the Italian Ministry for Economic Development, the Region of Sardinia and trade unions, the parties concerned have debated various solutions based on market conditions and specific network services, which would ultimately allow the plant to operate at costs that are both sustainable and in conformity with State aid guidelines.

Considering both the demand for primary aluminium in Europe and energy prices across the world, which are generally more favourable than those offered on the European market, does the Commission not believe that urgent European measures need to be implemented for the restoration and long-term relaunch of plants such as this, which would also help to avoid the environmental risks associated with the relocation of these facilities to non-EU countries?