

**Question for written answer E-012184/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Nessa Childers (S&D)

Subject: Need for confidentiality to safeguard the Commission's negotiating positions in international relations

In point 2.1 of her reply to Corporate Europe Observatory's confirmatory application for access to documents under Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 – Ref Gestdem 2015/1635 (Commission reference SG.B.4/CJ/ps - sg.dsg2.b.4(2015) 3844446), the Secretary-General of the Commission states that:

'the Commission has not shared with tobacco companies the Commission's negotiating positions and tactical approach; it has remained in listening mode when meeting these organisations. In fact, the Commission received information from these companies that, in case its content is known, would enable one to deduce such positions and approach concerning the relative importance of different barriers and their assessment of what might or might not be achievable in the negotiations. If this information was revealed, it would enable the negotiating partner to deduce such positions and tactical approach.'

Could the Commission explain what sources of privileged information it understands are available to British American Tobacco so as to allow the company to produce 'their assessment of what might or might not be achievable in the negotiations' in such an accurate manner as to enable the negotiating partner to deduce such Commission positions and tactical approach?

If this stems from the Commission's questions, how can the Commission claim to have remained in listening mode?